AHANANURU IN ITS HISTORICAL SETTING

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PREFACE

Dr. A. L. Basham, who was Professor of Indian and South Asian Histories, University of London, pointed out that a critical investigation of the Saṅgam classics in Tamil had not been undertaken. The Department of Indian History, University of Madras, therefore undertook a critical study of the Tamil Saṅgam classics, from the standpoint of history, and covered the study of two of the classics, the Naṟṟiṇai, and the Kuṟuntogai, both belonging to the Aham group of Tamil literature. Therefore, it was thought fit to cover all the other Saṅgam classics of this group, and the result was this thesis on Ahanāṉūṟu, the longest and the most comprehensive Aham work in Tamil.

Of late, patriotic fervour had resulted in the undue glorification of the Age of the Saṇgam, and in an exaggerated account of the exploits and virtues of the three Tamil kings of the age. On the other hand there has also been a tendency to condemn the Saṅgam literature as useless for the student of history. As pointed out by Dr. K. K. Pillay, during the course of his endowment lectures on "Naṟṟiṇai in its historical setting", "neither of the two extremes is desirable." There is a mine of historical material in the Tamil Saṅgam classics, which if interpreted in their proper light yield some reliable data. In this work an attempt has been made to present the facts of history without either exaggerating or underrating their importance. The data have been pieced together to give a picture of the life of the Tamils in its varied aspects. An attempt has also been made to make a free translation of fifty stanzas, which furnish material relating to the political, social, economic, and religious history of the Tamils, and it has been appended to the thesis. The system of transliteration adopted in this thesis is given in the table of diacritical marks, prefixed to the thesis, and is the one usually followed in transliterating Tamil letters. A bibliography of works, which have been actually consulted is also appended.

I express my most sincere and grateful thanks to the Vice-Chancellor, Padma Sri N. D. Sundaravadivelu, and the authorities of the university for having so kindly consented to publish this work. I also thank Dr. K. K. Pillay, under whose guidance this work was completed, for the encouragement shown to me and for his invaluable guidance. Dr. N. Sanjeevi, Professor of Tamil and Dr. V. Shanmugasundaram, Professor of Economics also deserve my sincere thanks for their useful suggestions in completing this work.

I thank the research scholars in the department for helping me, in reading the proofs and in preparing the index.

C. E. RAMACHANDRAN.

NOTE ON DIACRITICAL MARKS

Vowels

அ	:	a
ஆ	:	ā
இ	:	i
ஈ	:	ī
உ	:	u
ஊ	:	ū
எ	:	e
ஏ	:	ē
ஐ	:	ai
ஒ	:	o
ஓ	:	ō
ஔ	:	au

Consonants

க்	:	k
ங்	:	ṅ
ச்	:	ch
ஞ்	:	ñ
ட்	:	ṭ
ண்	:	ṇ
த்	:	t
ந்	:	n
ப்	:	p
ம்	:	m
ய்	:	y
ர்	:	r
ல்	:	l
வ்	:	v
ழ்	:	ḻ
ள்	:	ḷ
ற்	:	ṟ
ன்	:	n

ABBREVIATIONS

1.	Aham.	—	Ahanānūṟu
2.	K. N. S.	—	K. N. Sivarāja Pillai
3.	P. T. S.	—	P. T. Srinivāsa Iyeṅgār
4.	Porunar.	—	Porunarāṟṟuppadai
5.	Puṟam.	—	Puṟanānūṟu
6.	Silap.	—	Silappadikāram
7.	Tol. Aham.	—	Tolkāppiyam Ahattiṇai Iyal
8.	Tol. Karp.	—	Tolkāppiyam Kaṟpiyal
9.	Tol. Porul.	—	Tolkāppiyam Poruḷatikāram

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Age of Ahanāṉūṟu :

Ahanāṉūṟū is one of the earliest extant, Tamil classics of "The Saṅgam Age". There has been a great deal of controversy over the existence of the Saṅgam as an academy of poets and also over the fixation of the Age of the Saṅgam. Scholars such as P. T. Srinivāsa Iyeṅgār and K. N. Sivarāja Pillay doubted the very existence of the Saṅgam and went to the extent of remarking that "the idea of an organised Academy is a very modern one"[1] and that "the very idea of a literary Academy could not have been anything else than foreign" to the times.[2] They point to the various defects in the commentary on Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ, on which is based the existence of the Saṅgam as an Academy, and condemn its evidence as totally unreliable.[3] But one of these scholars, P. T. Srinivāsa Ieyṅgār has conceded in another place in the same work, the existence of such an academy of poets, though with a different name.[4] He not only concedes the existence of such an institution, but accepts as a matter of fact the practice of scholars meeting for assessing the merit of a composition in the King's court (Avai). He treats as reliable the account of Tolkāppiam's acceptance by a body of poets in the court of the Pāṇdyā King Nilandaru Tiruvir Pāndyan.[5] It is needless to point out that much energy and time was wasted in an attempt to disprove the existence of an academy of Tamil poets.

Whereas, these two scholars doubted and denied the existence of the Saṅgam as an institution and refused to admit the evidence of the commentary on Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ, the late Mr. S. Vaiyāpuri Pillai points out that there is some truth in the account of Iṟaiyanār Ahapporuḷ Urai, though it is mostly an imaginary account.[6] He states

[1] P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar — History of the Tamils, p. 233.
[2] K. N. Sivaraja Pillai — Chronology of the early Tamils, p. 18.
[3] *Ibid*, p. 19.
[4] P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar — History of the Tamils, p. 239.
[5] *Ibid*, p. 237.
[6] S. Vaiyapuri Pillai — Ilakkiya Chintanaikal, p. 37.

that the number of poets, who constituted the third Sangam, which according to the commentary on Ahapporul, was 449, more or less corresponds to the total number of poets who composed the two thousand and odd pieces of the Sangam literature. He goes on to say that there must have been other factors which contributed to the rise of the account of the three Sangams. The Pāṇdyās more than any other rulers of the Tamil country were considered as being specially attached to Tamil and their capital as a centre of Tamil[7]. The rise of Buddhist and Jaina Sanghās in the Tamil country is supposed to have served as models for such institutions among the Hindus.[8] According to Mr. Vaiyāpuri Pillai these two factors combined with the truth of the existence in the past of the number of poets assigned to the third Sangam should have been responsible for the rise of the account regarding the three Sangams. It can be said that the Tamil literary Sangam was known by other equivalents like Avai or Kūdal in the Sangam period and in the Sangam literature; but the Sanskrit name Sangam came to be applied to it some where about the Fifth Century A.D., when the liberal use of Sanskrit expressions in the Tamil country became common.

Now the commentary of Iraiyanār Ahapporuḷ is usually assigned to the 8th century A.D.[9] Appar, one of the Saivā saints considered to be the contemporary of Mahēndravarman I, the Pallavā ruler of the 7th century, in his Thēvāram refers to an academy of poets called the Sangam.[10] Thiruñānasambandar[11] another saivā saint and contemporary of Appar, Tirumangai Ālwār,[12] the vaishṇavā saint, and Āṇdāḷ,[13] another vaishṇavā hymnist all refer to a Tamil pertaining to Sangam. Of these Āṇdāḷ in her Tiruppāvai specifically mentions Sangattamiḷ. Now if Appar refers to an academy of poets called Sangam, then the name Sangam

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[7] Sirupanarruppadai: 1. 64—67; Puram 58.

[8] This view held by S. V. Pillai and P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar, etc., seems to be arbitrary and suggested by the organisation of the Buddha Sangha essentially a religious association). There is no contemporary evidence to substantiate the indebtedness of the founders of the Tamil literary Sangam to the Buddhist or the Jains. After all the idea of an association or sabha for purposes of common debating and discussion was not unknown to the Hindus even in Pre-Buddhist days.

[9] K. N. Sivaraja Pillai — Chronology of the early Tamils p. 19.

[10] Appar Thevaram: Tirupputtur Tiruttandagam St. 3.

[11] Sambandar Thevaram: Tiruttevur Thevaram 11. 1—4.

[12] Periyatirumoli — iii, 4th ten —. 10th stanza.

[13] Tiruppavai: 30.

should have been applied to the academy of poets even before the 7th century A.D. Then the commentary on Ahapporuḷ should be either taken to a period earlier than the 7th century A. D. or should be taken to have adopted the name Saṅgam, which was already in use to denote an academy of poets. It will be clear then that the commentator of the Ahapporuḷ did not invent an academy of poets which was not in existence, but only followed what the saivā saints had already indicated. This would also go to prove that the account in the commentary on Ahapporuḷ is not totally unreliable, as some scholars would think of it on other grounds. The argument that the Saṅgam works do not mention the Saṅgam and therefore, the Saṅgam was not in existence[14] is negative and cannot therefore be pressed much.

Now, regarding the fixation of the Age of the Saṅgam, scholars now feel that the total number of years given for three Saṅgams is incredible.[15] Prof. K. R. Srinivāsa Iyeṅgār remarks that "it seems to be reasonable to assume that the Saṅgam epoch comprised a period of about one thousand years, instead of the traditional ten thousand; and we shall not be far wrong if we fix 500 B. C. and A.D. 500 as the extreme limits of the Saṅgam Age".[16] Mr. P. T. Srinivāsa Iyeṅgār also has remarked "the earliest Tamil odes we now have represent a comparatively late stage of literary development. Their language is not the spoken language of the common man, but a strictly refined, conventionalized one. These early odes obey strict metrical rules and what is much more remarkable, exhibit a highly complicated scheme of literary convention."[17] Mr. P. T. Srinivāsa Iyeṅgār in the same work, says in another place that "much poetry must have been composed before the rigid conventions that characterize the early poems that are now extant could have been evolved".[18] Mr. P. T. Srinivāsa Iyeṅgār thinks that "possibly the earliest songs were in the unrefined dialects actually spoken; but they have all died just as have perished the early Sanskrit ballads".[19] In the view of these scholars then, the Saṅgam Age should have spread over a number of centuries and in the view of K. R. Srinivāsa Iyeṅgār the

[14] P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar — History of the Tamils, p. 238
[15] P.T.S. p. 232; K,N,S, p, 25; S,V· p 36
[16] R. C. Majumdar- History and Culture of the Indian People Vol. II; p. 293
[17] P.T.S. p. 150
[18] P.T.S. p. 151
[19] P.T.S. p. 149

earliest date that could be assigned to the Sangam Age is 500 B.C. So it is possible to hold that Tamil was well developed as a language even by 500 B. C.

But the discovery of Tamil inscriptions in the caverns in the hills in Brahmi script has led to the suggestion that Tamil would not have been a well developed language by about 500 B. C. Prof. K. A. Nīlakaṇṭa Sāstri, remarks "though the script of the inscriptions is Brahmi of the Southern variety, their language is seen to be Tamil still in its formative stages.[20] The script of these inscriptions resembles closely that of the brief inscriptions from Bhattiprolu, and may well be assigned to the third and second century B. C."[21] Prof. Sāstri adds "that the script was alphabetic and already included signs of the peculiarly Dravidian sounds like ṟ, ē, ḻ and ṇ. There is no doubt that these peculiarities were the result of a pretty long process of trial and error."[22] Prof. Sāstri evidently thinks that the Tamil alphabet would have been used in the inscriptions if it had been developed by that time. But he seems to base his conclusion on these short inscriptions which only give the names of persons who made the caverns fit for habitation, or of the monks who occupied them thereafter. He himself admits that these inscriptions from the caverns have not been fully elucidated.[23] One of these inscriptions show that a cavern was donated by one Polālaiyan̠ a Kutumpikan̠ or an householder from Ceylon. Some of these caverns are called Samaṇar Kudagu or caves of the Jains.[24] Then it is clear that these caverns were used by the ascetics, Jains as well as Buddhists and were donated by foreigners, such as the one from Ceylon. These inscriptions which we see in these caverns could have been those of the Jains and Buddhists who came from North India and were accustomed to use the Brahmi script. They could have used the Tamil language as the inscriptions were made in the Tamil country. The language that these northerners used could not have been chaste Tamil and on the basis of this if we are to say that Tamil was in its formative stage, then we are only on slippery ground. The very absence of other inscriptions in the

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[20] K. A. N. Sastri Comprehensive History of India Vol. II, p. 501
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 500
[22] *Ibid.*, p 501
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 500
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 500

Tamil country would lead one to think that the Tamils who were natives of the Tamil country did not make any such inscriptions. Inscriptions should have come into vogue in the Tamil country only when the Jains and Buddhists from the north came to the Tamil country and not before. So the available inscriptions do not represent the Tamils at all or as a whole, but only one section of the people that resided in the Tamil country. Then it is not fair to think that Tamil was not a well developed language by 500 B.C. It follows that the earliest date that we can assign to the Saṅgam Age could be 500 B C., as at least 500 years would have elapsed for Tamil literature to attain the standard that we find in the extant Tamil classics.

The extant Tamil classics, according to the commentary on Iṟaiyaṉār Ahapporuḷ belonged to the Third Saṅgam. The period of the third Saṅgam can be roughly taken to be the first three centuries of the christian era, on the basis of the synchronism of Senguṭṭuvan Chērā and Gajabāhū I of Ceylon. The discovery of the Roman coins of the reign of Augustus and the excavations at Arikamēdu and descriptions of foreign trade in the Saṅgam classics prove beyond doubt that the first three centuries of the Christian era was the age of the extant Tamil classics, one of which is the Ahanāṉūṟu.

The absence of any reference in the Saṅgam literature to the Pallavās, who became prominent at the close of the sixth century A.D., add to the validity of the theory about c 500 A.D., as the closing period of the Saṅgam. This may be deemed as a negative evidence though the total absence of any reference to such an important dynasty as the Pallavās cannot be treated as merely negative; Appar's reference to the Saṅgam by that name in the past tense in the middle of the 7th century A. D. positively places the Saṅgam to a period well before the 7th century A.D.

The place of the Ahanāṉūṟu in the Saṅgam Literature :

The Saṅgam literature consists of the Eṭṭutogai (the eight anthologies), the Pattuppāṭṭu (the ten Idylls) and the Padiṉeṉkīḻ-kaṇakku (the eighteen works employing shorter verses). The term Kīḻkaṇakku implies that there was one such collection called the mēṟ-kaṇakku. The Eṭṭutogai and Pattuppāṭṭu come under the category of mēṟ-kaṇakku. The mēṟ-kaṇakku works contain from

50 to 500 stanzas, whereas the Kilkaṇakku works contain less than fifty stanzas, except when the veṇba metre is employed. The Eṭṭutogai consists of Naṟṟiṇai, Kuṟuntogai, Ainguṟunūṟu, Padiṟṟuppattu, Paripādal, Kalittogai, Ahanānūṟu and Puṟanānūṟu. Among these the Kalittogai is in Kalippā metre, the Paripādal in paripādal scheme of composition and the rest of the works in Eṭṭutogai and the Pattuppāṭṭu are in Ahavaṟpā. These Saṅgam works are classified into Aham and Puṟam works. All poruḷ or matter or substance of the literature is divided into Aham and Puṟam. Aham or Ahattuṟai treats of love themes. Such love themes have been classified into five sections, (tiṇais) viz., Kuriñji (Pre marital love), marudam (post marital love), Mullai (the wife's patient suffering during her lord's separation and her deep longing for his return), Neydal (the lamentations of separated lovers) and Pālai (the separation of lovers and their consequent anguish). Puṟam or Puṟattuṟai deals with themes other than Aham, and is objective in nature. It includes War, Charity, Justice, Government etc. Among the eight anthologies, Naṟṟiṇai, Kuṟuntogai, Ainguṟunūṟu, Kalittogai and Ahanānūṟu are Aham works.

Among the Aham anthologies which are in Ahavaṟpā metre Ahanānūṟu contains longer poems and hence it is also known as Neḍumtogai. Whereas the Kuṟuntogai consists of stanzas of four to eight lines, Naṟṟiṇai of nine to twelve lines, the Ahanānūṟu is made up of stanzas consisting of thirteen to thirty one lines. The Ahanānūṟu is divided into three parts, namely the Kaliṟṟuyānai Nirai, Maṇimidaipavalam and Nitthilakkōvai. The first one hundred and twenty stanzas form the first part. The next one hundred and eighty stanzas form the second part and the last hundred stanzas form the third part. It is suggested that the first division is based on the beauty of the matter, the second on divergence between matter and manner of presentation, and third on the unity of matter and manner of presentation. The stanzas with odd numbers deal with Pālaittiṇai; the stanzas with number ending in twoes or eights deal with Kuriñjittiṇai ; those which end in fours deal with Mullaittiṇai ; those which end in sixes deal with Marutattiṇai, and those which end in tens relate to Neydal tiṇai. For e.g. in the first 10 stanzas 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 relate to Pālai, 4 to Mullai, 2, and 8 to Kuriñji, 6 to Marudam and 10 to Neydal ; and so forth for the rest of the anthology. This arrangement enables one to say without reference to the text to which tiṇai a particular stanza relates. Ahanānūṟu consists of more stanzas dealing with Pālai

and they number two hundred. There are eighty stanzas for Kuriñjittiṇai and forty each for Marudam, Mullai and Neydal. One hundred and forty five poets are said to have composed the stanzas in the Ahanānūṟu. On the whole there are four hundred and one stanzas including the invocatory verse. According to the literary convention the poets did not mention the names of the lovers but occasionally introduced in the stanzas the names of their patrons and their achievements in connection with the portrayal of the love affair between the hero and the heroine. In the stanzas where the patron is mentioned he is called the Pāṭṭudai Talaivan, according to the literary convention of the Tamils. This convention has been helpful in providing the students of history with some valuable historical information.

The Ahanānūṟu by its length and subject matter appears to have always been and is a standard work which gives a clear exposition and enunciation of the Aham theme. This is evident from the use of a large number of poems of the Ahanānūṟu as examples in the commentaries on the Tolkāppiam. Further this is the only work which is referred to as Aham and this would go to prove that for Ahatturai there was no better work than this.

The Ahanānūṟu was compiled by one Rudrasanman, son of Madurai Uppurikkudikkilān, at the instance of the Pāṇdyan Uggirapperuvaludi. Uggirapperuvaludi was the last of the Pāṇdyā kings who patronised the third Sangam.[25] The Ahanānūṟu could then have been compiled sometime in the middle of the third century A.D. This should not lead one to assign all the stanzas of the Ahanānūṟu to the third century A.D. The stanzas were composed by different poets, with different rulers as Pāṭṭudai Thalaivar, at different times and places. So the age of the anthology should not be taken as the age of the various stanzas in the Ahanānūṟu. The age of the stanzas can be determined only by a study of the contemporaneity of the various poets, whose compositions figure in more than one Sangam anthology. The problems besetting the determination of the age of the stanzas of the Ahanānūṟu are the same as those for the other Sangam works. Ahanānūṟu and Ainkuṟunūṟu are the only works in regard to which we know the compiler and the person who directed the compilation. From the references to practices such as Vēlan Veṟi

25 Commentary on Iraiyanar Ahapporul, p. 6.

Ādal,[26] Nadukal,[27] and non ritualistic marriage,[28] some are prone to think that Ahanānūru should belong to an age earlier than the other Sangam works. But references to such practices are seen in other Sangam works also and so no special antiquity can be claimed for Ahanānūru.

Ahanānūru as a Source of History:

Indian literature in general has been condemned as almost useless as a source of history. In addition it is regarded as a snare and rarely as a safe guide. Generally speaking, this is not far from the truth, but a careful study and dispassionate sifting of relevant material from the miscellaneous heap is bound to yield valuable grains of historical information which, if properly used can form the basis of correct historical evaluations.

The Sangam literature can be considered as a more satisfactory source of history than Tamil literature of any other age. This is largely due to the fact that the Sangam literature belongs to a period in the history of the Tamils when the poets were not inhibited by excessively religious or didactic, or any other extraneous sentiments in composing poetry. The poets of the Sangam age gave themselves upto a spontaneous and natural type of poetry which was by its very nature free from gross exaggerations, or unnatural hyperbole. The naturalness of the imagery and the simplicity and directness of the similes make the material in that literature very useful and dependable as a source of history.

While the entire body of Tamil Sangam literature falls within the purview of one or the other of the two divisions, Aham and Puram, Aham dominates the range of literature. It is to be expected that only Puram literature, which deals with Government, and war and other social institutions, of which objective accounting is possible, would be a more satisfactory source of history. This is in fact, also the case; for Puranānūru and Padirruppattu, which are the Puram works among the eight anthologies are rightly reputed as repositories of valuable historical information. But it would be wrong to conclude on this account that the entire body of Aham

26 Aham 182
27 Aham 35
28 Aham 86, 136

literature which deals mainly with love and therefore, personal and subjective, is useless for purposes of historical enquiry, or research. Even in composing Aham literature the poets of the Saṅgam Age had not divested themselves of the urge to use really valuable historical information. The most singular example of such employment of historical data in Aham literature is Ahanānūṟū itself. More than any other Aham work in Tamil literature, Ahanānūṟu is full of references to historical events and persons. In Ahanānūṟu the poets introduce historical material into the stanzas in an Indirect way. If the woes of a person are to be described, reference is made to the woes of a defeated army and this naturally involves mention of the battle, particulars about the victor and the vanquished; usually by some sort of convention a beautiful lady is likened to a prosperous city and here is an opportunity for the poet to mention the name of the city, its location and the ruler or chief who ruled over it[29]. While referring to the border lands of Tamilaham which the hero is supposed to have traversed on his quest for wealth the poets gain the opportunity to mention the names of the rulers of the border areas, and other interesting particulars about them and they form historical information of a valuable nature. The Vadugar,[30] the Āriyar,[31] the Kōsar[32] and others are mentioned at such places. References to innumerable battles such as that of Veṇṇi,[33] Vahaipparantalai[34] and strange information about heroes such as Miñili,[35] Matti[36] etc. and great āchievements of kings such as Karikālan[37] and Talaiyālaṅgānattu Nedumcheliyan[38] abound in the Ahanānūṟu.

However, the greater wealth of information in Ahanānūṟu relates to social history. Customs and manners of the people, relating to marriage, religious worship, and funerary practices etc., abound in Ahanānūṟu, and when these are supplemented by the mass of information in the other anthologies of the Saṅgam Age, a fairly full

29 Aham 44
30 Aham 107, 213
31 Aham 276, 336
32 Aham 15, 90
33 Aham 246
34 Aham 55
35 Aham 142, 148
36 Aham 6, 211
37 Aham 55, 125
38 Aham 36, 175

picture of the social conditions of the Tamils of that Age is bound to emerge.

Of the many poets whose compositions have been included in the Ahanānūṟu, Paraṇar and Māmūlanār are the two outstanding ones, whose proneness to refer to historical information is pronounced and to them the historian of the Sangam Age has reason to be thankful. References to such distant places, rivers and mountains like Pāṭaliputrā,[39] the Ganges,[40] and the Himalayas[41] and to such far off dynasties like the Nandas[42] of Magadha, or those nearer home such as the Kōsar of the Tuḷu Nāḍu[43] would make it clear that the poets concerned themselves with every place, institution and person of importance that they came to know.

The difference between Aham and Puṟam literature is, that while in the latter to some extent at least the political and sociological information is found arranged, in Aham such material is found strewn all over and has therefore, to be collected and stored and used for purposes of historical enquiry. Though there are such handicaps it will be evident from the above account that the importance of Ahanānūṟu as a source material for the history of the Sangam Tamils cannot be minimised.

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39 Aham 265
40 Aham 265
41 Aham 127, 265
42 Aham 265
43 Aham 15

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

The Ahanānūṟu refers to many kings and chieftains of the Tamil country. Such political personages are introduced by the poets in the stanzas by way of comparison in the situations portrayed by them. The prosperous cities are mentioned as similes to the beauty of the love-lorn ladies. That, the personages and events referred to are historical is evident from the references of more than one poet to the same personage or event. A comparative study of the Saṅgam works would also go to prove that the personages whose names find mention in the Ahanānūṟu are not imaginary persons created by the poets. It may be pointed out that as the poets were patronised by the kings and chieftains, very often they indulged in exaggerated accounts about their military achievements, just rule, and liberality of their patrons. Granting that this may be true with some poets, and to some extent, it is unlikely that any poet invented a political event or battle for the purpose of glorifying his patron. It has been said that in the longer poems, the poet had facility to include exaggerated accounts. Ahanānūṟu contains stanzas of thirteen to thirty-one lines and it may be said that in Ahanānūṟu also there is scope for exaggerated accounts. On the other hand the scope for the poet to exaggerate is limited in Ahatturai poems. In Ahatturai works there can be no direct reference to the patrons as in the Puṟatturai works. In the Puṟatturai works the poet addresses the patron and so he has full scope for eulogy. Hence it can be said that the picture of the political personages and events that we come across in Ahanānūṟu is a true and unvarnished one and this heightens the value of Ahanānūṟu as a source of history. However, it must be pointed out that even Ahanānūṟu does not help one to give a connected account of a ruler or a dynasty. With great effort, by a comparative study of the other Saṅgam works, a chronological account can be attempted. By no means this chronological account could be considered as well established and final; it could only be a basis for further work on the subject.

CHŌḺAS :

Ahanānūṟu mentions, Iḷamperum Senni, Perumpūṭ Senni, Karikāla, Kiḻḻivaḷavan and Polampūt Kiḻḻi among the choḻas. The choḻa Iḷamperum Senni attacked and destroyed the city of Pāḻi, which had fortifications of burnt bricks resembling copper in colour. In this battle Iḷamperum Senni killed the Vamba Vadugar, or the new northerners, and their elephants.[1] It is evident from this that Pāḻi was in the possession of the Vamba Vadugar when Iḷamperum Senni attacked and brought destruction to it. The Puranānūṟu attributes the destruction of Pāḻi and the Vada Vadugar to Iḷañjēt Senni[2]. It is therefore clear that Iḷamperum Senni and Iḷañjēt Senni were one and the same. Iḷañjēt Senni was the father of Karikāla.[3] The Puṟanānūṟu attributes to Iḷañjēt Senni the destruction of Pāmuḷūr, which belonged to Cēra.[4] It is seen from this poem that Iḷañjēṭ Senni possessed beautiful chariots. The chariot force he possessed should have been powerful and beautiful as to make the people address him as Uruvapahrēr Iḷañjet Senni. It is also clear from the same poem that Iḷañjēt Senni was the lord of the coastal tract or Neydal region. Some would think that the term Neydalaṅkānal prefixed to the name of Iḷañjēt Senni refers to a city by that name. But it appears to be more appropriate to take it as a reference to his sway over the littoral region. If this is accepted, his sway should have been confined to the littoral region and did not extend to the interior, where probably there was another Chōḻa ruling simultaneously from the city of Uṟandai, or Uṟaiyūr, the traditional capital of the Chōḻas. Nalamkiḻḻi Chēṭ Senni is described as the ruler of Uṟaiyur in Puṟanānūṟu[5] and as the name itself suggests he should have been the elder brother of Iḷañjēt Senni. Not even in a single stanza Iḷañjēt Senni is connected with Uṟaiyūr and this seems to confirm the view that he ruled from a different city.

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[1] Aham 375

[2] Puram 370, 378

[3] Porunararruppadai 11, 129—130

[4] Puram 203

[5] Puram 27, 68

Perumpūt Senni is described as the lord of Aḻumbil[6] in the Ahanānūṟu. In the same stanza it is said that, when Paḻaiyan fell fighting at Kaṭṭūr, having fought against a confederacy of rulers, which consisted of Nannan, Eṟṟai, Atti, Gangan, Kaṭṭi and Punṟurai, Perumpūt Senni took the field defeated the enemies and captured the city of Kaḻumalam along with the chieftain Kaṇaiyan. The name Perumpūṭ Senni only means, Senni who wore a big ornament. Hence, Perumpūt Senni could be identified with either Nalamkiḷḷi Sēt Senni or Iḷañjēt Senni. But a close study of the stanza would make it clear that Perumpūt Senni should be identified with Iḷañjēt Senni and not with Nalamkiḷḷi Sēt Senni. One of those against whom Paḻaiyan fought was Nannan. We learn from Ahanānūṟu that Nannan was the lord of Pāḻi.[7] Pāḻi was attacked and destroyed by Iḷañjēt Senni.[8] The attack of Iḷañjēt Senni on Pāḻi should have been prompted by some hostile action on the part of Nannan. If Perumpūt Senni is identified with Iḷañjēt Senni then the reason for Iḷañjēt Senni's attack on Pāḻi becomes clear. But it was noticed above that when Iḷañjēt Senni destroyed Pāḻi, it was in the possession of Vamba Vadugar and not in the hands of Nannan. Kuṟuntogai comes to our rescue in solving this riddle. It is said in the Kuṟuntogai that the Kōsar overran the territory of Nannan after felling his Kāvalmaram, or the tutelary tree.[9] This explains how Pāḻi was captured by Kōsar, from Nannan who probably fled from his city.

In the Ahanānūṟu the Kōsar are said to have been the people of the Tuḷu country in the northwest of the Tamil country.[10] They would have been referred to as Vadugar or northerners. Another stanza in the Ahanānūṟu mentions that when the Kōsar failed against Mohūr, they were joined by the Vamba Moriyar or the new Mauryas. (Ahanānūṟu 257). The Kōsar therefore, could have been referred to as Vamba Vadugar. It is now clear how the Vamba Vadugar were in possession

6 Aham 44
7 Aham 15
8 Puram 370, 378
9 Kuruntogai 73
10 Aham 15

of Pāḷi when Iḷañjēt Senni attacked and destroyed it. Iḷañjēt Senni was a liberal patron of the poets and bards.[11]

Karikāla :

Karikāla is mentioned in five places in the Ahanānūṟu. Paraṇar in one of the stanzas depicts the situation in which the confidante of the heroine refuses to admit the hero when he returned after having been in the company of a courtesan saying that the alar or scandal about him was even more widespread than the noise of rejoicing at Aḻundūr, when Karikāla of great fame defeated the two other Tamil Kings, the Pāṇdya and the Chēra and eleven chieftains at the battle of Veṇṇi.[12] It is not known from this stanza who the Chēra Pāṇdya and the chieftains were, that faced defeat at the hands of Karikāla in that battle. The name of the Chēra is furnished by another stanza which is attributed to Māmūlanār. In this stanza the Chēra, is called Chēralātan and is said to have starved himself to death on the battle field, looking in the direction of the north as he felt ashamed of his wound in the back.[13] But this leaves us in doubt as the term Chēralātan is a general term applied to many Chēras in the Saṅgam works. Puṟanāṉūṟu gives the information that it was one Perumcēralātan.[14] It may be asked why there was jubilation at Aḻundūr when Karikāla gained this victory. Though the stanza in question, does not explain it, the explanation is perhaps gained from Nachchinārkiniyar's commentary on Tolkāppiam, wherein he says that Iḷañjēt Senni married the daughter of the chieftain of Aḻundūr.[15] Aḻundūr being the place of Karikāla's maternal grandfather there was rejoicing when the news of Karikāla's victory at Veṇṇi was known.

Paraṇar who has given a description of the battle at Veṇṇi in another stanza in the Ahanānūṟu refers to another battle fought by Karikāla at Vāgaippaṟantalai. Karikāla is said to have invaded the enemy country and inflicted a severe defeat on nine rulers at Vāgaiyūr battle. The defeated rulers seem to have fled from the

11 Puram 10
12 Aham 246
13 Aham 55
14 Puram 65
15 Tol. Sutra 30

battlefield leaving their royal umbrellas, unable to withstand the attack of Karikāla.[16] It is not clear from the text whether all the defeated nine rulers were chieftains or whether the number included the two Tamil kings, the Chēra and Pāṇdya. It is also not clear whether the battle was fought before or after the battle of Veṇṇi. In the Porunarāṟṟuppadai Mudattāma Kaṇṇiyār has something to say about the battle of Veṇṇi. She says that like a lion's cub which in its very first attempt killed an elephant, Karikāla defeated the Chēra and the Pāṇdya at Veṇṇi.[17] Mudattama Kaṇṇiyār thereby implies that Veṇṇi was the first battle fought by Karikāla and so Vāgaiyūr battle should have been fought sometime after Veṇṇi. Mudattāmakaṇṇiyār also implies that the two kings who met Karikāla at Veṇṇi died. She uses in the work the term "Aviya" in Tamil to indicate their end. This meaning seems to be appropriate in view of the fact that Perumcēralātan starved himself to death by Vaḍakkiruttal on the battle-field of Veṇṇi.

The second battle of Vāgaiyūr should have been brought about by the desire of Karikāla to destroy the power of the chieftains who possibly escaped from the battle field of Veṇṇi, whereas the two kings died. Paraṇar in Ahanānūṟu implies that Karikālā pursued the fleeing enemy and gave battle to them at Vāgaiyūr which place was favourable to him.[18] But it should be noted that Paraṇar mentions that only nine rulers were defeated in this battle. This number given by the poet seems to fit in well with the number he furnishes for the battle of Veṇṇi. We have noticed that at Veṇṇi Karikāla defeated the two Tamil Kings and eleven chieftains. If we closely study that passage it will be clear that it can be interpreted to mean that the number eleven included both the Tamil Kings and so Karikāla fought against only eleven and not thirteen as it has been usually taken to mean. If the number defeated at Veṇṇi is taken to be eleven, in the second battle there could have been only nine, as the two kings died at Veṇṇi. The nine who were defeated at Vāgaiyūr

16 Aham 125
17 Porunar: 11. 139—46
18 Aham 125 11 16—17

should have all been chieftains. This conclusion is confirmed by Paraṇar's reference to the nine simply as nine rulers whereas in the other reference, he specifically says that the confederacy included Vēḷir and Vēndar, meaning chieftains and Kings.[19] There could not have been much interval between the battle of Veṇṇi and Vāgaiyūr and Vāgaiyūr battle should have closely followed Veṇṇi.

The battle of Vāgaiyūr should be considered as more important than the battle of Veṇṇi in which Karikāla gained a brilliant victory. The victory at Vāgaiyūr should have enabled Karikāla to strengthen his position and hold his own inheritance. The Porunarārruppadai would imply that Karikāla was a posthumous child of Iḷañjēt Senni[20] and so when he inherited his father's possessions he was only a child. Karikāla was possibly deprived of his father's possessions by his enemies and it can be said that when Karikāla fought at Veṇṇi he fought to recover the lost possessions. If the victory at Veṇṇi enabled him to get his own, the victory at Vāgaiyūr strengthened his position. Ahanānūṟu and all the other Saṅgam classics speak only of these two battles of Karikāla and no other battle. Therefore it will not be far from the truth, if we say that Karikāla reached the pinnacle of power by his victory at Vāgaiyūr.

The victory at Vāgaiyūr by destroying the power of his enemies, should have enabled Karikāla to devote his energy and time to promoting the welfare of his subjects. In the Ahanānūṟu Karikāla is referred to as Peruvaḷakkarikāl[21] meaning Karikāla of great prosperity, and Perumpeyar Karikāl[22] meaning Karikāla of great fame. These references imply his greatness and the prosperity of his state. The inscriptions of the Imperial Chōḷas, who came to power in the 10th century AD., say that Karikāla raised the embankments of the Kāviri to prevent the flooding of fields and thereby promoted the

19 Aham 246
20 Porunararruppadai 1, 132
21 Aham 125
22 Aham 246

prosperity of the subjects.[23] The Ahanānūṟu seems to confirm what is found in the inscriptions when it says in another stanza that Karikāla helped the ruined people and made them prosper.[24]

Now it is rather strange that Karikāla is not associated either with the city of Uṟaiyūr, or with Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinam in the Ahanānūṟu, which gives a clear account of his battles. In the Paṭṭinappālai alone Karikāla is associated with Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinam. But it should be stated in this connection that the text of the Paṭṭinappālai does not mention Karikāla and on the other hand mentions Tirūmāvaḷavan.[25] On the other hand the colophon attached to the Paṭṭinappālai identifies Tirūmāvaḷavan with Karikāḷa.[26] Therefore we are not on a sure and safe ground when we associate Karikāḷa with Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinam. Nakkīrar, who is one of the poets who mention Karikāḷa in the Ahanānūṟu associates Karikāḷa with Idaiyaṟu.[27] Nakkīrar himself associates Tittan with Uṟandai in the Puṟanānūṟu,[28] and Polampūṭ Kiḷḷi with Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinam in the Ahanānūṟu,[29]. It is clear from these references that Karikāḷa had nothing to do with either Uṟandai or Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinam. It should be remembered in this connection that even his father Iḷañjet Senni is not associated with either Uṟandai or Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinam and is only referred to as Iḷañjet Senni of the littoral tract.[30] In Ahanānūṟu itself Karikāḷa is associated with another city by name Kaḻār by Paraṇar,[31] the poet who refers to the battles of Karikāla. Ahanānūṟu 222 and 236 would make it appear that Kaḻār was a port city at the confluence of the river Kāviri with the sea. Hence it can be said that

23 E.I. Vol. XXII. P. 213; S.I.I. Vol. P. 383
24 Aham 141
25 Pattinappalai 1.299
26 Pattinappalai Colophon at the end
27 Aham 141
28 Puram 395
29 Aham 205
30 Puram 203
31 Aham 376

whereas, Idaiyāṟu was the capital of Karikāla, Kaḻār was his port city.

From Purananūṟu it is seen that Karikāla fed the minstrels with food and drink and that he performed Vēdic sacrifices. In this poem Karikāla is referred to as a man of wisdom.[32] Karikāla is mentioned by as many as seven poets in all the Saṅgam works. It is no wonder a maṇ of such benevolence, munificence, valour and wisdom has been the centre of attraction and admiration.

Paraṇar who glorifies Karikāla in the Ahanānūṟu refers to an incident in the life of Karikāla in the same work in another place. He says that while Karikāla with his boisterous relatives was looking on, Atti, who wore an anklet, and who danced in the Kāviri to the sweet sound of the golden cymbals, on the occasion of the festival of the freshet, was carried away by the Kāviri attracted by his handsomeness.[33] Paraṇar himself in three other stanzas has said that when Atti was carried away by the Kāviri, Ādi Mandi, not knowing what to do searched for him in all directions by travelling from place to place wondering whether he was drowned in the sea, or whether he was hidden by the Kāviri.[34] Atti seems to have been saved by one Marudi who in that attempt lost her own life in the sea and earned fame by her self sacrifice.[35] The Silappadikāram mentions that Karikāla's daughter got back her husband the Chēra from the sea by the power of her chastity.[36]

It is thought from the reference in the Silappadikāram that Ādi Mandi was the daughter of Karikāla and that Atti, her husband was a Chēra prince. If this identification is accepted then in the time of Karikāla there should have taken place a matrimonial alliance between the Chōḻas and the Chēras. But it is pointed out that if Ādi Mandi had

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[32] Puram 224
[33] Aham 376
[34] Aham 135, 222, 236
[35] Aham 222
[36] Silambu: Canto 21 1.1. 11—15

been really the daughter of Karikāla, Karikāla would have himself taken steps to find out Atti, instead of allowing Ādi Mandi herself to search for him by going from place to place. It can be pointed out as against this view that Ādi Mandi because of her intense love and devotion for her husband took upon herself the task of finding him out. There is nothing in the text which implies that she went all alone in search of Atti, and it is likely that she was accompanied by the guards. There are some who say that the name Ādi Mandi would mean literally a female monkey and therefore it could not have been the name of a princess. But we come across chieftains with names such as Āndai,[37] meaning owl, Erumai,[38] meaning buffalo, and Paṇṇi,[39] meaning pig. So such names seem to have been common in those days and possibly did not suffer from the odium which we are likely to attach to them in the present day. Therefore Ādi Mandi could have been the name of Karikāla's daughter.

Kiḷḷivaḷavan :

Nakkīrar, one of the Saṅgam poets, mentions Kiḷḷivaḷavan[40] in one of the poems of the Ahanānūṟu. In another poem he refers to one Polampūṭ Kiḷḷi[41] which name means Kiḷḷi, who wore a gold ornament. Therefore Polampūṭ Kiḷḷi can be identified with Kiḷḷivaḷavan. Nakkīrar states that Kiḷḷivaḷavan invaded the enemy country and defeated at Kūdal "Paḻaiyan Māran of tall chariots and adorned elephants" and that Kōdai Mārban rejoiced when Kiḷḷivaḷavan after defeating Paḻaiyan Māran seized his swift horses and elephants and also captured his city.[42] It is seen from the ninth Padigam in the Padirruppattu that Paḻaiyan Māran was a Pāṇdya.[43] Nakkīrar himself in another poem in the Ahanānūṟu mentions Kōdai as the ruler of Vañji.[44] It is then clear that Kōdai was a Chēra King. Puṟa-

37 Puram 71
38 Aham 253
39 Aham 13
40 Aham 346
41 Aham 205
42 Aham 346
43 Padirruppattu Patigam 9
44 Aham 120

nānūṟu also refers to a Chērā by name Kōdai Mārban.[45] Now it is not known why the Chēra rejoiced when the Pāṇdya was defeated by the Chōḷa. The cause for the rejoicing was perhaps the hostility that prevailed between the Pāṇdya and the Chēra. However, nothing definite can be said about the cause for the rejoicing of the Chēra.

Nakkīrar has also mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu that Kiḷḷivaḷavan was the lord of Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinam and that he attacked and destroyed the forces of the wealthy Kōsar in an attempt to extend his domain.[46] In the Puṟanānūṟu. Āiattūr Kiḻār has eulogised a Chōḷa by name Kuḷamurrattutuñjiya Kiḷḷivaḷavan and in it he refers to the Chōḷa as Pasumpūṭ Kiḷḷi,[47] which is similar in meaning to the name Polampūṭ Kiḷḷi. who has been identified with Kiḷḷivaḷavan. Thus Kiḷḷiivaḷavan of Ahanānūṟu may be identified with Kuḷamuṟṟattu tuñjiya Kiḷḷivaḷavan of the Puṟanānūṟu. Ālattūr Kiḻar who eulogised Kuḷamuṟṟattutuñjiya Kiḷḷivaḷavan has also eulogised Nalaṅ Kiḷḷi Sēṭ Senni,[48] the elder brother of Ilañjet Senni. But Ālattūr Kiḻār seems to have lived at the closing years of Nalaṅ Kiḷḷi and in this stanza he bemoans the death of Nalaṅ Kiḷḷi. Ālattūr Kiḻār refers to Kuḷamuṟṟattutuñjiya Kiḷḷivaḷavan as the ruler of Uṟandai.[49] But in another poem Nalaṅ Kiḷḷi is said to have been the ruler of Uṟandai.[50] In view of this Kuḷamuṟṟattutuñjiya Kiḷḷivaḷavan could be taken to have succeeded, Nalam Kiḷḷi whose death Ālattūr Kiḷar bemoans. Then Kiḷḷivaḷavan who could be treated as the successor of Nalaṅ Kiḷḷi Sēt Senni should have been the contemporary of Karikāla, the son of Ilañjet Senni. While Karikāla ruled from either Idaiyaru[51] or Kaḷār,[52] Kiḷḷivaḷavan ruled from either Uṟandai or Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinam. The destruction of the forces of the Kōsar

[45] Puram 48, 49
[46] Aham 205
[47] Puram 69
[48] Puram 225
[49] Puram 69
[50] Puram 68
[51] Aham 141
[52] Aham 376

by Kiḷḷivaḷavan could also have been due to the traditional hostility of the Chōḻas toward the Kōsar, from the time of Iḷañjet Senni.

Tittan :

Paraṇar also mentions one Tittan in one of his compositions in the Ahanānūṟu. Paraṇar describes Tittan as the lord of Uṟandai where there were barns of paddy, and states that he was the father of a girl by name Aiyai.[54] In another poem Paraṇar tells us that Tittan's Uṟandai had fortifications.[54] In the Puṟanānūṟu Sāttandaiyār implies that he was the father of the Chōḻa Pōrvaikkō-perunarkiḷḷi.[55] This reference implies that Tittan belonged to the Chōḻa line. This seems to be confirmed by Tittan's association with Uṟandai.[56] Nakkirar who mentions Karikāla and other Chōḻas also mentions Tittan in Puṟanānūṟu and associates him with Uṟandai.[57] Since both Paraṇar and Nakkīrar refer to Tittan, Tittan could not have been far removed in time to the other Chōḻas mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu.

Tittan Veḷiyan :

Paraṇar himself mentions one Tittan Veḷiyan in another stanza in the Ahanānūṟu.[58] As the name itself suggests he was the son of Tittan. Whereas Tittan is associated with Uṟandai, Tittan Veḷiyan is in addition said to be the lord of Kānalam Peruntūrai. Paraṇar describes an incident which took place at the court of Tittan Veḷiyan at Uṟandai. It is said that Kaṭṭi a chieftain came to Uṟandai along with another chieftain by name Pāṇan with his forces but fled without fighting against Tittan Veḷiyan, when he heard the sound of the sweet Kiṇai drum, emanating from the court of Tittan Veḷiyan.[59] Possibly Kaṭṭi mistook the sound of the Kiṇai for the sound of the war

53 Aham 3
54 Aham 122
55 Puram 80
56 Aham 6, 122
57 Puram 395
58 Aham 152
59 Aham 226

drum and retreated thinking that Tittan Veḷiyan was prepared for any sudden attack by the enemy. Tittan Veḷiyan was a liberal patron of the bards.[60]

PĀNDYAS:

In the Ahanānūru three Pāṇdyas are mentioned and they are Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam, Paḻaiyan Māran and Pasumpūt Pāṇdyan. Two poets celebrate Seḻiyan's victory over seven rulers at Ālaṅgānām.[61] The colophons to the stanzas 23 and 76 of the Puṟanānūṟu identify the victor of Ālaṅgānam with Talaiyālaṅgānattu Nedum Seḻiyan. It is, however, interesting to note that none of the poets who mention Seḻiyan refers to him as Nedum Seḻiyan. It is his chariot that is described as a tall chariot[62] and as a chariot with banners.[63] It can be said in view of this that Seḻiyan was his name and that afterwards he came to be referred to as Nedum Seḻiyan.

Paraṇar, one among those who have celebrated the military exploits of Seḻiyan, mentions Seḻiyan's victory in the battle at Kūdal, in which the Chōḻa and the Chēra were made to turn their back and flee from the battlefield, leaving behind their war drums.[64] Paraṇar has not mentioned the names of the Chēra and the Chōḻa who were defeated by Seḻiyan. But the Puṟanānūṟu enables us to infer the name of the Chēra. The colophon to stanza 17 of Puṟanānūṟu says that the Chēra Yanaikaṭ Sēi Māntaram Cēral Irum-Poṟai was in the prison of Talaiyālaṅgānattu Nedum Seḻiyan and that the Chēra made good his escape and regained his throne. Evidently the Chēra who faced defeat at Kūdal was Māntaramcēral Irumpoṟai. He should have been caught while fleeing from the battlefield and shut in prison by Seḻiyan. As for the Chōḻa, the colophon to stanza 125 in Puṟanānūṟu implies that Māntaram cērai

60 Aham 152
61 Aham 36, 209
62 Aham 47, 175, 296
63 Aham 36, 57
64 Aham 116

Irumporai and the Chōla Rājasūyam Vētta Perunarkilli were contemporaries. On the basis of this reference it has been suggested by some scholars that the Chōla who met defeat at Kūdal was Rājasuyam Vētta Perunarkilli. But the text of the stanza would indicate that Māntaram cēral Irumporai and Rājasūyam Vētta Perunarkilli were at war with one another and hence it is doubtful whether they could have joined together and fought against Seliyan. It could be said that these two became enemies after they had fought against Seliyan or had their differences composed and met Seliyan at Kūdal. However it must be said that this identification of the chōla who fought against Seliyan cannot be taken as final.

Nakkīrar refers to another battle fought by Seliyan at Musiri. Seliyan is said to have laid siege to Musiri and killed many elephants.[65] Another poet Erukkāttūr Thāyankannanār also mentions the siege of Musiri and states that Seliyan carried away a gold image from Musiri.[66] These references go to prove that Seliyan invaded the Chēra country and returned after attacking Musiri. Now what prompted Seliyan's invasion of the Chēra country? It is known that Māntaram cēral Irumporai escaped from the prison of Seliyan and once again ascended the throne.[67] Seliyan could have anticipated trouble from Māntaram cēral and in order to prevent the Chēra from causing any trouble he invaded the Chēra country.

Seliyan fought one more battle at Ālangānam. Nakkīrar and two other poets, Ālambēri Sāttanār and Kalladanār refer to this battle. Nakkiranār gives a full list of the enemies against whom Seliyan fought at Ālangānam. The Chēra and the Chōla and the Chieftains Titiyan, Elini Erumaiūran, Irungōvēnmān and Porunan, were the enemies whom Seliyan defeated at this battle.[68] Here also

65 Aham 57
66 Aham 149
67 Puram 17
68 Aham 36

the names of the Chēra and the Chō**l**a are not given. The Puranānūru would make it appear that Seliyan killed the two kings and also some of the chieftains.[69] The battle of Ālangānam seems to have been the most important of all the three battles fought by Seliyan, for he came to be known as Seliyan of Ālangānam. Among the three battles, Kūdal, Musiri and Ālangānam, the battle of Ālangānam seems to have been the earliest. In Puranānūru Idaikunrūr Kilār implies that he was still young when he fought the battle of Ālangānam.[70] Idaikunrūr Kilar also states in another stanza in the Puranānūru that Seliyan's enemies invaded his territory thinking that Seliyan was young and, therefore victory would be with them and that the plunder following the defeat of Seliyan would be great.[71] It is clear from Puranānūru that Seliyan met his enemies who invaded his territories at Ālangānam while he was still very young. If the battle of Ālangānam was therefore the first battle the other two must have followed the battle of Ālangānam. The battle of Kūdal was perhaps the result of the desire on the part of the Chērās and Chōlas, whose members were killed at Ālangānam, to wreak vengeance on Seliyan. But that they did not succeed in their attempt is clear from the description of the battle of Kūdal. Allur Nanmullaiyār in a stanza in the Ahanānūru mentions that Allur was in his possession.[72] In another stanza Seliyan is referred to as the lord of Korkai where the fishermen took to pearl fishing.[73]

Pasumpūṇ Pāṇdyan is mentioned in the Ahanānūru by Paraṇar Nakkīranār, Madurai Īlattu Būdan Dēvanār, and Madurai Kaṇakkāyanār. Paraṇar mentions that the flag of Pasumpūṇ Pāṇdya was adorning the mountain of Adigan who was famous for his liberality.[74] In the Kuruntogai Paraṇar specifically states that Adigan was the vassal of Pasumpūṭ Pāṇdyan and that he died at Vāgaipparandalai.

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69 Puram 25, 76
70 Puram 77
71 Puram 78
72 Aham 46
73 Aham 296
74 Aham 162

The Koṅkar are said to have rejoiced at the news of his death.[75] The fact, that the Koṅgar rejoiced at the death of Adigan, implies that Adigan should have been hostile towards the Koṅgar. Nakkīrar in the Ahanānūṟu says that when Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍyan drove the Koṅgar and captured their territory, there was rejoicing at Kūdal.[76] It is likely Adigan attacked the Koṅgar along with Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍyan and it should have been the reason why the Koṅgar were jubilant at his death. Paraṇar refers to Adigan as the one who gave to the bards what they desired[77] and from this it can be said that this Adigan was the Adigan of Tagadūr. In Puṟanāṉūṟu Auvaiyār mentions that Paraṇar sang in praise the victory of Adigan, when Adigan destroyed Kōvalūr. This reference of Auvaiyār leaves beyond doubt, that the Adigan who was the vassal of Pasumpūṭ Pāṇḍyan was none else than Adigan of Tagadūr.[78] Adigan was defeated by Peruñcēral Irumpoṟai, who destroyed Tagadūr.[79]. It is likely therefore, that Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍyan, who was the overlord of Adigan should have been the contemporary of Peruñcēral Irumpoṟai. Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍyan is described in the Ahanānūṟu as the most just ruler among the Tamil Kings of his day and his country has been referred to as the one that received universal praise.[80] This Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍya could be identified with Kanappēr tanda (Kadanda) Uggiraperu Vaḻudi. In the Puṟanānūṟu Auvaiyār has addressed three rulers in one stanza.[81] It is seen from this stanza that the Chēra Mārivеṇgō, Pāṇḍyan Kanappērtanda Uggira Peruvaḻudi and Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunaṟkkiḷḷi were seated together and this makes them contemporaries. Out of these Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunaṟkkiḷḷi was seen to have been the contemporary of Māntaramcēral Irumpoṟai,[82] who in turn was the contemporary of Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam.[83] This Uggiraperuvaḻudi could not have been far removed in time to Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam and he could be identified with Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍyan whose vassal Adigan was the patron of Auvaiyār. Uggiraperuvaḻudi appears to have been himself a poet.

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75 Kuṟuntogai 393
76 Aham 253
77 Aham 162
78 Puṟam 99
79 Padiṟṟuppattu : Patigam : 8
80 Aham 338
81 Puram 367
82 Puṟam 125
83 Puṟam 17

There is one stanza in Ahanānūṟu which is attributed to him.[84] Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍyan or Uggiraperuvaḻudi can be placed either before or after Seḻiyan. That Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍyan should be placed after Seḻiyan and not before Seḻiyaṉ will be evident from the following. One of those defeated by Seḻiyan at Ālaṅgānam was Irungōveṇmān.[85] Irungōvēṇmān was the contemporary of Kapilar.[86] Kapilar composed the seventh decad in the Padiṟṟuppattu on Selvakkaduṅgō.[87] Selvakkaduṅgō was the father of Peruñcēral Irumpoṟai [88] Peruñceral Irumpoṟai should then have belonged to the generation later than that of Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam. Thus Pasumpūṇ Pāṇḍyan the contemporary of Peruñcēral Irumpoṟai also should be placed after Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam.

Paḻaiyan Māran is another Pāṇḍya whom we come across in the Ahanānūṟu. Nakkīranār, mentions as seen above, that Paḻaiyan Māran was defeated at Kūdal, by Kiḷḷivaḷavan, who captured the city along with many elephants and fast steeds and that Kōdai Mārban rejoiced at the defeat of Paḻaiyan Māran.[89] That Paḻaiyan Māran was a Pāṇḍya becomes evident from the ninth patigam of Padiṟṟuppattu.[90] It can also be seen from the attribute applied to him by the poet viz. Nedum tēr (Tall chariot), which attribute is also applied to Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam. Further his association with Kūdal proves beyond doubt that he was a Pāṇḍya. Now, as it has been pointed out, nothing definite can be said about the reason why the Chēra rejoiced at the discomfiture of the Pāṇḍya.

THE CHERAS:

The Ahanānūṟu refers to a number of Chēras and among them Udiyan Chēral, Nedumchēralatan, Kuṭṭuvan and Mañtaram Cēral Irumpoṟai are noteworthy. In a stanza in the Ahanānūṟu Udiyan Chēral is said to have extended his dominions by conquering lands

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84 Aham 26
85 Aham 36
86 Puṟam 201, 202
87 Padiṟṟuppattu : Patigam : 7
88 Ibid : Patigam : 8
89 Aham 346
90 Padiṟṟuppattu : Patigam : 9

belonging to others.[91] It is seen from the same stanza that Udiyan was a liberal patron of the bards, to whom he gave presents. Two stanzas in the Ahanānūṟu refer to his lavish charity and sumptuous feeding. It is said that he took upon himself the duty of distributing charity at a place called Kuḷumūr.[92] In another place, Udiyan is credited with the worship of his famous ancestors by offering a large quantity of food.[93] But in the Puṟanānūṟu he is said to have given food to the two contending parties, the Pāṇdavas and the Kauravas in the battle of Kurushētra.[94]. Though the text of the stanza does not mention the Pāṇdavas and the Kauravas by name, the reference that five fought against hundred has been taken by the commentator to refer to the Pāṇdavas and the Kauravas. This attribution to Udiyan could have been a conventional attribution of an act of some remote ancestor of Udiyan. This could have been also due to the desire of the poet to introduce in his composition his knowledge of the great Bhāratā war. Patigam 2 of the Padiṟṟuppattu makes Imayavaramban Nedumchēralātan, his son[95]. In Puṟanānūṟu Udiyan Chēralātan is described as Vānavaramban. The poet explains this epithet by saying that the Sun which came out of the sea which was his boundary in the east, having travelled across the sky, disappeared in the sea which was his frontier in the west.[96] In the Ahanānūṟu at three places Vānavaramban is mentioned. In one place Vānavaramban is said to have driven back the sea.[97] In another place Veḷiyam is said to have belonged to Vānavaramban.[98] In the Padiṟṟuppattu the epithet Vānavaramban is applied to Narmudichchēral and Ādukōṭpaṭṭu Chēralātan.[99] Wherever the epithet Vānavaramban only is used in the Ahanānūṟu, it may mean a reference either to Udiyan Chēral, or Nārmudichchēral, or Ādukōṭpaṭṭu Chēralātan. Hence we cannot credit Udiyan Chēral with having driven back the sea, or consider that Veḷiyam was in his possession.

91 Aham 65
92 Aham 168
93 Aham 233
94 Puṟam 2
95 Padiṟṟuppattu : Patigam : 2
96 Puram 2
97 Aham 45 Pushing back the sea here means only defeating the pirates at sea.
98 Aham 359
99 Padiṟṟuppattu 38, 58, and Patigam 6

Chēralātan, who imprinted the bow emblem on the Himālayas and hence came to be called Imayavaramban Nedumchēralātan,[100] is also mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu. One of the stanzas states that Chēralātan defeated the enemies on the sea and having cut off their tutelary Kadambu tree, made out of it a victorious war drum. The stanza further adds that having imprinted the curved bow emblem on the Himālayas, as to make his ancestors wonder at this, he heaped near his palace at Māndai, the tributes that he received from the enemies, together with diamonds and a gold image of a lady on an Āmbal (a measure of land) of land. This accumulated wealth was left there so carelessly as to make it get corroded in the earth.[101] It is not known from the stanza who the enemies were. The fact that the enemies are said to have been destroyed on the sea implies the maintenance of a navy by the Chēra. In the Padiṟṟuppattu Imayavaramban is said to have bound the Yavanas of harsh and unrefined language to trees with their hands tied backwards and to have poured on their heads melted butter or oil. It is also said that he received beautiful ornaments along with diamonds, perhaps, as a ransom.[102] The Yavanas could have been the enemies whom Imayavaramban destroyed on the sea. But we learn that the tutelary Kadambu tree was felled and a war drum made out of it. If the Yavanas are taken to be the enemies referred to in this place, even the Yavanas should have had a tutelary tree as was the custom among the Tamils. The Yavanas could not have had a tutelary tree, if they as traders were just used to visit and return to their own country soon after their business transactions; they could have grown a tutelary tree, if only, they had a settlement of their own in India. The Arikamēdu excavations have made it clear that there was a Roman settlement at that place. That there were settlements of the westerners at other places in South India would not be far from the truth in view of the existence of a Roman settlement at Arikamēdu. It may be contended that the enemies whom Imayavaramban destroyed were pirates; but it can be pointed out that the pirates could not have had a tutelary tree as the ruling dynasties.

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100 Padiṟṟuppattu : Patigam: 2
101 Aham 127, 347
102 Padiṟṟuppattu : Patigam: 2

In another stanza it is said that Imayavaramban became furious and attacked the Āryan Kings, imprinted the bow emblem on the Himālayas and returned having made captives the Kings who were hostile towards him.[103] This reference to his Himālayan expedition raises two fundamental questions. Would it have been possible for the Chēra to take an expedition to the Himālayas in the days when there were no easy means of transportation ? It would not have been an easy task, but certainly not impossible to go up to the Himālayas. It may be said that the Chēra undertook an expedition to the north and this could have served as a basis for the poet's eulogy, that the Chēra went up to the Himālayas. But that the Chēra actually went up to the Himālayas seems to be a probability. As it will be shown in the subsequent pages, the New Mauryas (the Vamba Mōriyar) are said to have invaded the South. When it was possible for a dynasty of the north to go to the south, it should have been equally possible for a Southern dynasty to go to the north. Again it may be pointed out that the New Mauryas were an Imperial power and so it was possible for them to invade the south. Now nothing prevents one from treating anyone of the three Tamil dynasties as having attained Imperial status, for there are numerous instances to show that at different times different dynasties of the Tamil Country occupied such an Imperial status by defeating the other rulers in the south; for example, the Chōḻas under Karikāla, the Pāṇdyas under Nedumseḻiyan and the Chēras under Seṅguṭṭuvan. The rock edict of Asōka would make it clear that the Tamil Kingdoms were independent and powerful enough to be treated by the emperor Asōka as friendly states. If that was the power of the Tamil Kingdoms no doubt need be entertained regarding the expedition of the Chēra to the Himālayas. Udiyan Chēral, it was noticed, is credited with feeding the rival armies of the Pāṇdavas and the Kauravas in the Puṟanāṉūṟu. It was stated that this could only be a conventional attribution to him of an act of some one of his remote ancestor. It was thus presumed that some Chēra, prior to the time of Udiyan had fed the rival armies which fought at Kurushetra. If the Chēra in question could go to the north and feed the two armies, the Chēra should have been in possession of vast resources both for going to North India and for

103 Aham 396; Padiṟṟuppattu: Patigam 2

feeding the armies. If this is admitted Imayavaramban's expedition to the north, in all probability, was an historical fact. Imayavaramban's clash with and defeat of the Āryan Kings was perhaps due to any attempt on their part to obstruct the march of the Chēra through their dominions.

A second question arises out of the reference to the defeat of the Āryan Kings of the north. Does this mean that the Chēras were not Āryans ? Does it also mean that all the north and not the south was under the hegemony of the Āryans? Prof. K.A. Nilakaṇṭa Sāstri is inclined to think that the Chēras were an Āryan dynasty, from the reference to Chērapādah in the Aiterēya Araṇyaka.[104] If the Chēras were really an Āryan dynasty their enemies in the north would not have been referred to as Āryans. Hence the Chēras could not have been an Āryan dynasty.

Imayavaramban was the son of Udiyan Chēral and according to the Padiṟṟuppattu he reigned for fifty eight years.[105] His long reign would probably justify the possibility of an expedition to the Himālayas.

Māmūlanār, in one of the poems states that Chēralātan fought against Karikāl Vaḷavan at Veṇṇi and that he starved himself to death, sitting on the battle field facing the north, as he was ashamed of having received a wound on his back. Māmūlanār adds that when the news of his death, which was at the same time both painful, and sweet reached the virtuous people attached to him, they also committed suicide, so that they might join him in the world that is not easy of attainment.[106] Though the name of the Chēra is given as Chēralātan, he could be identified with Perumcēralātan,[107] as seen in the foregoing pages. This Chēra could not have been far removed in time to Imayavaramban. Kaḻathalaiyār who has described the battle between Imayavaramban and Vēlpahṟadakkai Peruviṟar Kiḷḷi in which both of them died[108] has also described the battle of Veṇṇi in which Perumcēralātan was defeated and so died.[109]

104 K. A. Nilakanta Sāstri, History of South India, 1955; p. 65

105 Padiṟṟuppattu: Patigam: 2

106 Aham 55

107 Puṟam 65

108 Puṟam 62

109 Puṟam 65

Perumcēralātan could have been the contemporary of Imayavaramban Nedumcēralātan. The very perfixes Perum and Nedum attached to both these names indicate that they were contemporaries and in order to distinguish them from one another these prefixes were used.

Paraṇar mentions Kuṭṭuvan in two stanzas in the Ahanānūṟu. He states that Kuṭṭuvan, who possessed an army as vast as the sea, established garrisons wherever he desired, and that as he could not meet with any enemy on land, attacked the sea and made it recede.[110] The Kuṭṭuvan whom Paraṇar mentions in Ahanānūṟu should have been his own patron Kadal Piṟakkōṭṭiya Seṅguṭṭuvan. This becomes evident from the Padiṟṟuppattu where in identical terms he has described Seṅguṭṭuvan [111] The commentator explains that the phrase Kadal Piṟakkōṭṭiya would mean, the one who destroyed the power of the sea which was like protection to those who lived surrounded by the sea.[112] It can be said, therefore, that Seṅguṭṭuvan gained a naval victory. There is no means of knowing the enemy against whom Seṅguṭṭuvan gained a naval victory. Paraṇar himself in another stanza mentions that Kuṭṭuvan was the lord of Marandai.[113] Ahanānūṟu credits Seṅguṭṭuvan with the possession of Kaḻumalam[114] and Tondi[115] and Kuda Nādu[116] also. Seṅguṭṭuvan was the son of Imayavaramban Nedumcēralātan and he ruled for a period of fifty-five years.[117] In the Ahanānūṟu we come aross a Chēra called Chēramān Iḷam Kuṭṭuvan.[118] He appears as the author of one of the poems. It is not known who this Iḷam Kuṭṭuvan was. In the Padiṟṟuppattu it is stated that Seṅguṭṭuvan presented Paraṇar, the author of the fifth decad with umbarkādu and his son Kuṭṭuvan Chēral.[119] Seṅguṭṭuvan would have left his son under the custody of the poet Paraṇar only for the sake of giving his son good education. If this was

110 Aham 212
111 Padiṟṟuppattu 46
112 Padiṟṟuppattu 46 Patigam 116
113 Aham 376
114 Aham 270
115 Aham 290
116 Aham 91
117 Padiṟṟuppattu Patigam 5
118 Aham 153
Patigam 5

true, Kuṭṭuvan Chēral would have become a poet, tutored by a poet of no mean calibre. Perhaps, this Kuṭṭuvan Chēral was also known as Iḷam Kuṭṭuvan. Another chēra by name Mudangikkidanta Nedum Chēralātan also appears as an author of a stanza in the Ahanānūṟu.[120] He is not easy of identification.

Kaḷaṅkāikkaṇṇi Nārmudichchēral is another chēra who is mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu. It is stated by Kalladanār that Nārmudichchēral defeated and killed Nannan at Vāgaipperumthuṟai and recovered the lands he had lost.[121] The same event is referred to in the Padiṟṟuppattu. Therein it is stated that Nārmudichchēral defeated Nannan at Kadambin Peruvāyil and cut off his tutelary Vāgai tree.[122] It has been suggested that Vāgaiperumthuṟai was another name for Kadambin Peruvāyil. But it should be noted that the Padiṟṟuppattu speaks of Nannan's defeat only at Kadambin Peruvāyil, whereas the Ahanānūṟu speaks of his death at Vāgaipperumthuṟai. In view of this it can be said that Nārmudichchēral defeated Nannan at Kadambin Peruvāyil, and then again defeated and killed him at Vāgaiperumthuṟai. If this was true Ahanānūṟu speaks of the second battle fought by Nārmudichchēral. Nārmudichchēral was the son of Imayavaramban Nedumchēralātan by another wife and Nārmudichchēral is said to have reigned for twenty-five years.[123]

Paraṇar who mentions Kuṭṭuvan also mentions Māntaran Poṟaiyan Kaduṅgō in the Ahanānūṟu. Paraṇar states that he excelled many in his liberality and that the bards who praised him by their songs had their bowls filled by him and returned joyfully.[124] This Māntaran Poṟaiyan Kaduṅgō should have been Māntaram Cēral Irumpoṟai, who figures in the Puṟanānūṟu.[125] Paraṇar himself in another poem states that the Kolli mountain belonged to Poṟaiyan and that God Himself drew the picture of Kollippāvai on the mountain.[126] Auvaiyār also mentions one Pasumpūṭ Poṟaiyan and

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120 Aham 30
121 Aham 199
122 Padiṟṟuppattu: Patigam 4
123 *Ibid*: Patigam 4, 6
124 Aham 142
125 Puṟam 17, 20, 22, 125
126 Aham 62

refers to him as the lord of Kolli.[127] Auvaiyār was the contemporary of Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunaṛkiḷḷi,[128] who in turn was the contemporary of Māntaram Cēral Irumpoṛai.[129] Hence Auvaiyār's reference to Pasumpūṭ Poṛaiyan can be taken as a reference to Māntaram Cēral Irumpoṛai. Another poet by name Kudavāyir Kīrattanār states in the Ahanānūṛu that Toṇdi belonged to Poṛaiyan of strong chariot.[130] It is not known exactly whether this is also a reference to Māntaram Cēral Irumpoṛai. But Paraṇar, who mentions Māntaran Poṛaiyan Kaduṅgo in Ahanānūṛu mentions Poṛaiyan in Kuṛuntogai and associates him with Toṇdi.[131] Therefore, Kudavāyir Kīrttanār's reference could be taken as a reference to Māntaram Cēral Irumpoṛai, and he could be considered as the lord of Toṇdi. As Māntaram Cēral Irumpoṛai was the contemporary of Auvaiyār[132] and as Auvaiyār was the contemporary of Paraṇar,[133] he could be assigned to the age of Seṅguṭṭuvan who was the contemporary of Paraṇar.[134]

Another chēra by name Kōdai is mentioned in two stanzas in the Ahanānūṛu. Kaṇakkayanār Maganār Nakkīranār states that Kōdai possessed a powerful elephant and chariot corps and that his city Karuvūr, which was prosperous and large was situated on the bank of the river Ānporunai, whose waters were crystal clear.[135] Another poet also describes Kōdai's Vañji as a prosperous city.[136] It is evident from these two references that Karuvūr and Vañji were one and the same and that this

127 Aham 303
128 Puṛam 367
129 Puṛam 125
130 Aham 60
131 Kuṛuntogai : 128
132 Puṛam 367, 125
133 Puṛam 99
134 Padiṛṛuppattu : Patigam 5
135 Aham 93
136 Aham 263: While Pundit M. Rāghava Iyeṅgār, in his "Chēran Seṅguṭṭuvan" and Sri R. Rāghava Iyeṅgar in his "Vanji Managar", have defended the identification of Vanji with interior Karūr of the Trichy District, Dr. S. K. Aiyeṅgar in his "Chēran Vanji" holds that Vanji was only Thiruvānjikkalam. Prof. K. A. NilaKaṇṭa Sāstri in his "History of South India", says that 'the mention of the Vani river flowing near the chera capital shows that Karuvūr was in fact Vanji.' The discovery of numerous Roman coins in the neighbourhood and Ptolemy's statement that the inland city of Korūrā was the chērā capital, also point to the same conclusion.

city was on the bank of the river Ānporunai. This would mean that Karuvūr, which was the capital of the Chēras, was an inland city and not a port. It is this which has led a number of scholars to identify Karuvūr with Karūr near Trichinopoly. But it can be pointed out that in the neighbourhood of Karūr we find the Amarāvati river and not the Ānporunai. It is therefore, clear that this Karūr could not have been the Karuvūr, the ancient capital of the Chēras. Nakkīrar in another stanza mentions a chēra by name, Kōdai Mārban and states that he rejoiced when the Pāṇdya Paḻaiyan Māran was defeated at Kūdal by the Chōḻa Kiḷḷivaḷavan.[137]

This Kōdai Mārban can be taken to be the Kōdai who figures as the ruler of Karuvūr. In the Ahanānūṟu one more chēra appears as the author of a stanza, and he is Kōttambalattu Thuñjiya Chēramān.[138] The same chēra has to his credit another stanza in the Puṟanānūṟu.[139] It is seen from the Puṟanānūṟu that this chēra lost his wife and that he mourned the death of his wife. It is not known whether he was a reigning prince or not.

CHIEFTAINS :

In the Ahanānūṟu a number of chieftains are mentioned by the different poets who composed the stanzas. The chieftains seem to have been the vassals of one or the other of the three Tamil Kings, or independent chiefs enjoying hegemony over a small principality, whose political life centred around a fortified town. These chieftains could not but participate in the wars among the three Tamil kings, or even among themselves. That a large number of chieftains held different areas of the Tamil country becomes clear from a reference to the combination of fourteen Vēḷir at a particular time.[140] It is not possible to arrange all of them in a chronological order and also state the exact territory or town held by them. At best an attempt can be made to indicate the part played by them in the vortex of power politics, and in the cultural life of the people.

Neduvēḷ Āvi : He was the lord of Podini.[141] The old commentary states that Podini was a mountain.[142] In another stanza also

137 Aham 346
138 Aham 168
139 Puṟam 245
140 Aham 135
141 Aham 1
142 Aham 1 The Podini Mountain has been identified with Paḻani hill.

Podini is mentioned and at this place the old commentary states that Podini was a town.[143] Therefore, there is confusion as to whether Podini was a mountain or a town. Perhaps, Podini was the name of the mountain as well as of the town at the foot of the mountain. Neduvēḷ Āvi seems to have been a brave warrior; for he is compared to the war God Muruga, in his valour.[144] He was in possession of a force consisting of elephants, whose tusks had been well shaped by cutting. Neduvēḷ Āvi is stated to have defeated and driven back the Maḻavar, who rode on fearful horses.[145] The term Maḻavar in Tamil means warriors, and so it is not known who these Maḻavar were. The poet states that Āvi's place was full of gold[146] and this would mean that Āvi was one of the wealthy chieftains of the day.

Matti: He was the chieftain of the Paradavar[147] or the fisherfolk of Kaḻār[148] which was at the confluence of the Kāviri with the sea [149]. Matti was in possession of an army of soldiers armed with the vēl or spear.[150] Matti appears to have been a vassal of the chōḻa king. This becomes evident from two stanzas in the Ahanānūṟu. Māmūlanār states that, as the 'illiterate Eḻini did not join the work of seizing the herds of elephants, which had fallen into the pits dug for the purpose, the king became furious and ordered Matti to punish Eḻini and that Matti defeated Eḻini in a far off place, and that Eḻini lost some of his teeth in the fight. Māmūlanār adds, that Matti planted a stone in commemoration of his victory at the entrance to the town of Veṇmaṇi and set the fallen teeth of Eḻini on the strong doors of Veṇmaṇi.[151] It is clear from this stanza, that Matti was the vassal of a king and that he carried out the orders of that king. But it is not known from this source, whether the king was the chōḻa, chēra or pāṇdya. That this king was a Chōḻa becomes clear from another stanza in the Ahanānūṟu, attributed to Paraṇar. Here Paraṇar narrates the incident in which Atti was drowned in the Kāviri, when he gave a dance performance in the presence of

143 Ahanāṉūṟu: Ed. Chakravarthi Rājagōpālaryaṉ Stanza: 61
144 Aham 1, 61
145 Aham 1
146 Aham 61
147 Aham 226
148 Aham 226, 6
149 Aham 226, 236
150 Aham 6, 226
151 Aham 211; This illiteracy means that he was one who had not learnt to obey the king.

Karikāla and his relatives at Kaḻār.[152] It is clear from this stanza that Kaḻār was under the jurisdiction of Karikāla and hence Matti should have been the vassal of the Chōḻa Karikāla. It may be argued that there is nothing definite in the stanza to show that Matti was the vassal of a chōḻa and that too of Karikāla. As against this argument it can be pointed out that the same poet Paraṇar who narrates this incident has mentioned Matti as the chieftain of Kaḻār and of the Paradavar.[153] Therefore Matti could be taken as the contemporary of Karikāla and also as his vassal.

Paṇṇi: He was one of the chieftains of the land and he is stated to have been the lord of Kōdai.[154] According to the old commentary Kōdai was Kōttūr.[155] Paṇṇi is said to have been a liberal patron, who gave to the poor who came to him all that he had without reserving anything for himself. Paṇṇi appears to have performed a vēdic sacrifice[156] though this sacrifice is usually explained as the food offering made up of the heads on the battle - field to the Goddess, when one gains victory. The context in which the performance of the sacrifice is mentioned by the poet makes it clear that Paṇṇi should have performed a Vēdic sacrifice as it was usual to offer presents to the brahmanas and the poor on such occasions.

Kāri: Kāri, one of the famous seven liberal patrons of the Tamil country,[157] also figures in the Ahanānūṟu. The Puṟanānūṟu identifies Kāri with Malaiyamān Tirumudikkāri.[158] Kāri was the Lord of Muḷḷūr.[159] But in another stanza in the Ahanānūṟu Kāri is stated to have been the Lord of Kōval.[160] The old commentary identifies Kōval with Thirukkōvalūr.[161] Kāri should have therefore been the lord of both Muḷḷūr and Thirukkōvalūr. It is stated in the Kuṟuntogai specifically, that Muḷḷūr was the name of a forest.[162] So

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152 Aham 376
153 Aham 226
154 Aham 13
155 Aham 13
156 Aham 13
157 Puṟ ı n 158
158 Puṟam 122
159 Aham 209
160 Aham 35
161 Ahanānūṟu : Ed. Chakravarthi Rājagōpālāryan-35
162 Kuṟuntogai: 312

we may not be far from the truth if we say that Thirukkōvalūr was the seat of government of Kāri and Muḷḷūr formed part of his territory. Koduṅkāl, which was situated on the bank of the river Peṇṇai was one of the towns in the territory of Kāri.[163] Ahanānūṟu avers that Kāri killed Ōri of undying fame and transferred the Kolli mountain, which was full of Jack fruit trees, to the Chēras.[164] This would imply that Kāri was either an ally, or a vassal of the Chēra. But in the Puṟanānūṟu we come across one Thērvaṇ Malaiyan, and he is stated to have helped the Chōḻa Rājasūyam Vēṭṭa Perunaṟkiḷḷi against the Chēra Māntaram Chēral Irumpoṟai.[165] The phrase "Thērvaṇ", in the name Thērvaṇ Malaiyan means Malaiyan who gave chariots as presents.[166] Malaiyamān Thirumudikkāri is also referred to in the Puṟanānūṟu as the one who gave away many chariots as present.[167] In the Ahanānūṟu also Kāri is described as the one who possessed a tall chariot.[168] All these would go to show that Thērvaṇ Malaiyan and Malaiyaman were one and the same. If this is true, we must explain Malaiyan's friendliness towards the Chēra. Malaiyan seems to have been a powerful chieftain and he seems to have participated in the wars between the Tamil Kings, on the side of any one of them at different times. That all the three Tamil kings were anxious to have him as their ally becomes clear from a stanza in the Puṟanānūṟu. Kapilar says that the three Tamil kings sent ambassadors to the court of Kāri with presents and requested him to become their ally.[169] This policy of Kāri, joining either the Chēra or Chōḻa as he chose in the wars between the two Tamil Kings at different times possibly did not prove advantageous in the long run; for in the Puṟanānūṟu it is seen that the sons of Malaiyaman were about to be trampled upon by an elephant at the orders of the Chōḻa Kuḷamuṟṟattutuñjiya Kiḷḷivaḷavan and that the poet Kovūr Kiḻār intervened and pleaded for mercy towards the sons of Malaiyaman and saved them from the clutches of death.[170]

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163 Aham 35

164 Aham 209

165 Puṟam 125

166 It may mean also one who possessed innumerable chariots.

167 Puṟam 123

168 Aham 35

169 Puṟam 122

170 Puṟam 46

Ori: Kāri's contemporary Ōri is also mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu. Ōri was the Lord of Kolli hills in which there were Jack fruit trees full of ripe fruits.[171] Ōri is described as having attained everlasting fame.[172] The Ahanānūṟu does not indicate how Ōri attained everlasting fame. But the Puṟanānūṟu states that Ōri was unstinting like the showers in his liberality,[173] and so it can be said that his fame rested on his liberality. Ōri was killed by Kāri as seen above.

Titiyan: He was the lord of the Podiyil hill.[174] Titiyan possessed an army of warriors who wielded the shining spear and a swift chariot corps.[175] He is stated to have fought against the Vēḷir.[176] It is not known who these Vēḷir were. But one among the Vēḷir was perhaps, Anni. Anni cut off the tutelary Punnai tree of Titiyan at Kuṟukkaippaṟandalai.[177] When Anni felled the Punnai tree, the dancers are stated to have celebrated the cutting of the Punnai tree by singing loudly.[178] This would lead one to the conclusion that Anni gained a victory over Titiyan and Titiyan submitted to Anni. But far from it, Titiyan killed his enemy Anni, possibly after Anni had cut off his tutelary Punnai tree.[179] Anni's invasion on Titiyan's territory could not have had any effect on the power of Titiyan. Ahanānūṟu gives an account of an act of chivalary connected with the life of Titiyan. The eyes of the father of a girl, by name Anni Miññili, were put out by the elderly Kōsar, because he admitted that his cow entered the field in which the crops have been raised and caused damage. Anni Miññili vowed to take revenge on the Kōsar and abstained from taking food and donning rich clothes. She sought the help of Titiyan, the chieftain, and Titiyan put to death those Kōsar who were responsible for the death of her father.[180] This account would imply that Titiyan had something to do with the Kōsar. It is not known

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171 Aham 208
172 Aham 209
173 Puṟam 204
174 Aham 25
175 Aham 322
176 Aham 331
177 Aham 145
178 Aham 45
179 Aham 126
180 Aham 262

whether Titiyan fought against the Kōsar as a power, or his action was directed against only a few of the Kōsar who killed the father of Anni Miñili. Whatever it was, this account establishes beyond doubt his valour. Aḻundūr is stated to have been one of the strongholds of Titiyaṉ.[181] It is not known whether this Aḻundūr was the same Aḻundūr in which there was rejoicing at the news of Karikāla's victory at Veṇṇi.[182] If it was the same two conclusions can be drawn from this identification : One, Titiyan could have been the maternal grandfather of Karikāla, and two that the Kōsar who were killed were the few residents of Aḻundūr and not the Kōsar who were one of the ruling dynasties. Titiyan was not only a great soldier he was also a liberal patron of the bards. The court of Titiyan was adorned by the Pāṇar who played on the yāḻ, and to them Titiyan presented many ornaments.[183] Titiyan was defeated in the battle of Ālaṅgānam in which he fought against Seḻiyan along with the Chēra, the Chōḻa and four other chieftains.[184] Titiyan possibly lost his life in the battle of Ālaṅgānam [185]

Pulli : Pulli was the Lord of Vēṅgadam or Tiruppati hills.[186] Pulli is described as the chief of Kaḷvar or highwaymen.[187] But in another place he is referred to as the chief of the illiterate Iḷaiyar. The old commentary gives the meaning hunters for the word Iḷaiyar.[188] It is stated, that Pulli's followers caught the tuskers and secured paddy by exchanging the tusks and toddy.[189] This reference makes it clear that Pulli's men were not highwaymen but were only hunters. Pulli appears to have employed the elephants in war.[190] In one of the stanzas Pulli is stated to have subdued the Maḻavar [191] The term Maḻavar in Tamil means warriors and so it is not known whether the term Maḻavar in this place refers to the warriors who were enemies of Pulli or to a definite clan called Maḻavar. Pulli was famous for his unfailing liberality towards the

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181 Aham 196
182 Aham 246
183 Aham 331
184 Aham 36
185 Puṟam 76
186 Aham 61, 83, 209
187 Aham 61
188 Aham 83
189 Aham 61
190 Aham 209
191 Aham 61

bards.[192] Pulli's subjects also are stated to have been hospitable to the travellers, or new comers.[193] Pulli's Vēṅgata hill seems to have been the extreme north eastern limit of the Tamil country, for it is stated that beyond this mountain it was the land of the Vadugar, who spoke a different language.[194]

Āy: Āy was one of the famous seven liberal patrons of the age,[195] and he is mentioned in three places in the Ahanānūṟu. That Āy was also known as Āy Aṇdiran is clear from the Puṟanānūṟu.[196] In the Ahanānūṟu Āy is mentioned as the lord of Talaiyaṟu and Talaiyaṟu is stated to have been in the forest of Āy [197]. But the Puṟanānūṟu specifically states that Podiyil mountain belonged to Āy.[198] Ahanānūṟu makes Titiyan the lord of Podiyil.[199] In one other stanza in the Ahanānūṟu Podiyil is stated to have been in the possession of the Pāṇdya.[200] It may be that all the three mentioned above, Āy, Titiyan and the Pāṇḍya were in possession of the different sides of the Podiyil Hill, or these were in possession of Podiyil Hill at different times.[201] Āy offered plenty of food to all those who came to him whether they happened to be highly educated or not.[202] Āy is stated to have destroyed the forts of the enemies and brought choice ornaments.[203] Āy should have been a liberal patron as well as a brave soldier.

Ahdai: Ahdai is referred to in the Ahanānūṟu as one who presented the bards who entered his court sounding their drum with ornaments and elephants.[204] Ahdai is said to have been protected by the Kōsar who established him in a well guarded safe place.[205] One of the stanzas of the Ahanānūṟu mentions Ahudai. He is stated to have consoled the wives of Āy Eyinan

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192 Aham 359
193 Aham 311, 393
194 Aham 295
195 Puṟam 158
196 Puṟam 129
197 Aham 152
198 Puṟam 128
199 Aham 25
200 Aham 138
201 The possibility of Āy and Titiyan having owned Podiyil at different times and both being the feudatories of the Pāndya cannot be ruled out.
202 Aham 152
203 Aham 69
204 Aham 76
205 Aham 113

when the latter was killed in battle at Pāḻi.[206] There can be little difficulty in identifying Ahdai with Ahudai and this means that Ahdai should have been an enemy of Nannan the Lord of Pāḻi.[207]

Piṭṭan : Piṭṭan was the lord of Kudirai Mountain, where the clouds settled.[208] Piṭṭan is referred to as a vassal of the Chēra in the Ahanāṉūṟu.[209] Piṭṭan also was a war-like ruler who fought with his enemies with a spear.[210] Piṭṭan, like the other chieftains of the land, presented rich ornaments to those who desired presents from him.[211]

Paṇṇan : He was the lord of the town Siṟukudi situated to the north of the Kāviri.[212] He too was a brave warrior who destroyed in war many elephants each resembling a hillock. Paṇṇan's life was dedicated to the promotion of the welfare of others. In the Puṟanānūṟu Kuḷamuṟṟattutuñjiya Kiḷḷivaḷavan refers to his hospitality in a striking manner. Paṇṇan is called therein the doctor of the hungry.[213] Kiḷḷivaḷavan and Paṇṇan should have been, therefore, contemporaries. Paṇṇan also seems to have been the contemporary of the Pāṇḍye Vaḻudi. In the Puṟanānūṟu the poet Madurai Aḷakkār Ñalaḻār Makanār Maḷḷanār states, that "if he does not sing in praise of Paṇṇan, let the Pāṇḍya Vaḻudi abstain from protecting his relatives."[214] This statement of the poet implies that Paṇṇan was either a relative of the Pāṇḍya or a Vassal of vaḻudi. In the Naṟṟiṇai Siṟugudi is associated with one Vāṇan and his town is stated to have been in the territory of the Pāṇḍya Seḻiyan.[215] In the Ahanāṉūṟu also at two places Vāṇan is stated to have been the lord of Siṟugudi.[216] But, it is indicated that some manuscripts contain the name Paṇṇan.[217] Therefore Vāṇan could be taken to be

206 Aham 208
207 Aham 15
208 Aham 143
209 Aham 77, 143
210 Aham 77
211 Aham 143
212 Aham 54, 177
213 Puṟam 173
214 Puṟam 388
215 Naṟṟiṇai 340
216 Aham 117, 269
217 Aham 117, 204

Paṇṇan and as the lord of Sirugudi. The Narrinai would imply that Paṇṇan was the contemporary of Seliyan too.

Pāṇan : Pāṇan's state was in the north of the Tamil country.[218] He is referred to in the Ahanānūru as the one who never turned his back to the enemy.[219] Pāṇan seems to have been a good wrestler. Pāṇan wrestled with one Āriya Porunan and crushed his shoulders and arms, the sight of which made Kaṇaiyan feel ashamed.[220] Pāṇan once joined with Kaṭṭi and approached the court of Tittan Veḷiyan at Urandai with the intention of capturing it, but fled from the place mistaking the sound of the sweet drum to be the sound of the war drum of Tittan Veḷiyan. This reference goes contrary to the statement of the poet Kalladanār that Paṇan never turned his back. Allowing a margin for exaggeration on the part of the poet who eulogised Pāṇani it should be remembered that the statement that Pāṇan and Kaṭṭ, fled without attacking Urandai mistaking the sound of the sweet drum for the war drum appears to be an equally exaggerated statement. The fact, was, perhaps, that Pāṇan and Kaṭṭi were defeated by Tittan Veḷiyan in battle.

Kaṭṭi : Kaṭṭi was one of the chieftains and as indicated above he seems to have fought against Tittan Veḷiyan and fled from Urandai which he planned to capture with the help of Pāṇan.[221] Kaṭṭi also fought along with Nannan, Errai, Atti, Gaṅgan and Puṇrurai against Perumpūṭ (Senni the chōḷa) and was defeated.[222]

Pāri : Pāri who has earned immortal fame by his liberality is also mentioned in the Ahanānūru. In the Ahanānūru, Auvaiyār and Madurai Nakkiranār give interesting information about Pāri's resistance to the three Tamil Kings. Nakkiranār has stated, that Pāri who was liberal and who rode on a swift steed, with the help of Kapilar, who was praised by many, and whose fame was known all over the world, secured the well grown sheaves of paddy from far off places, and cooking the paddy with the Āmbal flowers and consuming it as food, though years passed, desirous of fighting and therefore not forsaking his place, attacked the Tamil Kings, who were in possession

218 Aham 325
219 Aham 113
220 Aham 386
221 Aham 226
222 Aham 44

of tuskers and drove them from his place.[223] Auvaiyār explains how the paddy from far off places was secured. Flocks of birds left Pāri's fortress, Parambu in the morning to places, where there were sheaves of paddy and returned with them at sunset.[224] It is evident from the accounts of Madurai Nakkirānār, and Auvaiyār that Parambu was the town from which Pāri held sway over his territory and that the three Tamil Kings laid siege to his capital and that the siege lasted for a number of years and in the end the Tamil Kings who failed to capture Parambu were made to flee from Parambu by Pāri, who evidently came out of his fort and gave battle to his enemies. The Purانānūru furnishes the information that Pāri's state comprised of three hundred townships.[225] The old commentary states that Kapilar trained the parrots to procure paddy from far off places.[226] Auvaiyār refers to the munificence of Pāri who is stated to have rewarded the bards and poets with elephants resembling hillocks in size, along with choice ornaments. The Purananūru avers that Pāri gave away all the three hundred townships to the bards.[227] It is no wonder that such a bountiful patron earned immortal fame and his name has become a byword for liberality.

Adigan: Paranar in one of the stanzas in the Ahanānūru mentions one Adigan who was truthful and who satisfied the desire of the bards and whose mountain looked beautiful with the victorious flag of Pasumpūṭ Pāṇdyan.[228] Adigan should have been the vassal of Pasumpūṭ Pāṇdyan who has been identified above with Kanappēr Kadanta Uggiraperu Vaḷudi, as the flag of the Pāṇdya adorned the mountainside of Adigan. This conclusion becomes strengthened by a reference in the Kuruntogai wherein Paraṇar specifically states that Adigan was the vassal of Pasumpūṭ. Pāṇdya[229] Paraṇar himself in the Ahanānūru mentions one Añji and refers to him as the the Lord of Kudirai mountain.[230] Auvaiyār in one of the stanzas of the Purananūr states that Paraṇar glorified Adiyamān Nedumān Añji, when he

223 Aham 78
224 Aham 303
225 Puram 110
226 Ahanāṇūru: Ed. Rājagōpālaryaṇ: 78
227 Puram 110
228 Aham 162
229 Kuruntogaiū: 393
230 Aham 372

destroyed Kōvalūr.[231] From this it is clear that Añji was none else than Adiyamān Nedumān Añji, and that his destruction of Kōvalūr was one the important events in his life. Now it should be noted that Kudirai mountain belonged to the chieftain Piṭṭan,[232] who was a vassal of the Chēra,[233] as seen above and if so how could Añji be described as the Lord of Kudiraimalai. Añji could have conquered the Kudirai mountain from Piṭṭan. Perumcēral Irumpoṟai the Chēra is credited with a victory over Adigamān and with the destruction of Tagadūr the capital of Adiyamān in the Padiṟṟuppattu.[234] The attack of Perumcēral Irumpoṟai could have been caused by Adiyamān's conquest of Piṭṭan's Kudirai mountain. Añji was in possession of the fourfold army which included bowmen, tuskers, wild and strong prancing horses and chariots[235] Añji's warriors used to capture in war his enemies's cattle.[236]

Eḻini: We come across five Eḻinis in the Ahanānūru. One of them is stated to have possessed an infantry force armed with spears and a cavalry regiment.[237] This Eḻini could have been either Adiyamān or his son Pohuteḻini. Adiyamān is referred to in one of the stanzas of the Puṟanānūṟu as Eḻini.[238] In the Puṟanānūṟu itself Adiyamān's son Pohuteḻini is also referred to as Eḻini.[239] So the name Eḻini could mean either Adiyamān or his son Pohuteḻini and so the Eḻini referred to in the Ahanānūṟu could be either of the two.

Another Eḻini is described as the one who possessed a force of elephants of war and is stated to have been one among the seven defeated by Seḻiyan at Ālaṅgānam.[240] It is not definite whether all the seven were killed at Ālaṅgānam, since whereas one stanza in the Puṟānānūṟu states that the Chēra and Chōḻa were killed[241] another

231 Puṟam 99
232 Aham 143
233 Aham 77
234 Padiṟṟupattu : Patigam : 8
235 Aham 115, 352, 372
236 Aham 372, 115
237 Aham 105
238 Puṟam 158
239 Puṟam 392
240 Aham 36
241 Puṟam 25

stanza would imply that all the seven were killed.[242] If the version that the two kings alone were killed is accepted, the Eḻini who fought at Ālaṅgānam could have been Adiyamān, for Adiyamān is stated to have died at Vāgaippaṟandalai in the Kuṟuntogai.[243] Even Pohuteḻini could be taken as the one who fought at Ālaṅgānam as the name Eḻini would refer to either of the two. If on the other hand the version that all the seven who fought at Ālaṅgānam died in the battle is accepted, Eḻini who died at Ālaṅgānam could have been Pohuteḻini.

One other Eḻini appears as a vassal of a King. This Eḻini did not turn up when the elephant hunt was organised and the Khedda operations were on. Thereupon the ruler sent Matti to punish the defaulter and Matti defeated and capturted Eḻini. In this fight Eḻini lost some of his teeth which were set on the door at Veṇmaṇi by Matti.[244] This Eḻini is described as one who had no education. That this Eḻini should have been the vassal of the Chōḻa has been indicated above.

A fourth Eḻini is referred to as Ādan Eḻini and is stated to have been the lord of prosperous Sellūr, where the Iḷamkōsar adorned themselves with garlands of Kuvaḷai and jasmine flowers.[245] This Eḻini should have been definitely different from the rest and should have been the chief of the Iḷamkōsar. One Kaṇṇan Eḻini is also mentioned as the Lord of Mudukunram in the Ahanānūṟu and he is stated to have driven his enemies in battle.[246]

Evvi : He was the lord of Nīdūr, from the streets of which emanated the sweet sound of the yaḻ. Evvi is stated to have destroyed the power of his enemies at Uṟattūr and Arimaṇavāyil [247] Evvi was also the lord of Nīḻal.[248] Evvi seems to have been an ally of one Anni who turning a deaf ear to the just and wise advice of Evvi, fought against Titiyan and lost his life.[249] It is stated that in the prosperous

242 Puṟam 76
243 Kuṟuntogai : 393
244 Aham 211 This incident has been noted already in our treatment of 'Matti'
245 Aham 216
246 Aham 266
247 Aham 197
248 Aham 366
249 Aham 126

cities of Evvi, a Pāṉmagal (possibly a paradava girl) exchanged the Vaḻai fish caught by her brothers in the sea, for large sized pearls and ornaments.[250] This reference implies that Evvi was ruling over the coastal tract. Evvi seems to have been a patron of the bards. When he lost his life in a battle, the Pāṇar are stated to have broken their yāḻ, with which they had sung songs of praise on Evvi.[251] One of the stanzas in the Puṟanāṉūṟu confirms the conclusion that Evvi was the lord of the littoral region and adds that he also ruled over a town by name Miḻalai. It is seen from the same stanza that Evvi's Miḻalai was conquered by Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam.[252] It is likely that Evvi lost his life in the battle against Seḻiyan at Miḻalai, as he is stated to have died in a battle. Evvi should have been the contemporary of both Titiyan and Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam.

Anni : Anni, as seen above cut off the tutelary Punnai tree of Titiyan at Kuṟukkaipparantalai, without paying heed to the advice of Evvi and lost his life.[253] As he was the contemporary of Evvi, he should have also been the contemporary of Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam.

Paḻaiyaṉ : He was a vassal of the Chōḻa and the lord of the town, Pōr on the bank of the river Kāviri.[254] From another stanza in the Ahanāṉūṟu it becomes clear that Paḻaiyan was the vassal of Perumpūṭ Senni[255] who has been identified above with Iḷañjēṭ Senni. In the same stanza it is stated that Paḻaiyan fought against a confederacy of chieftains, consisting of Nannan, Eṟṟai, Atti, Gaṅgan, Kaṭṭi and Punṟuṟai and that he was killed in the battle, whereupon the Chōḻa Perumpūṭ Senni took the field and after defeating the enemies of Paḻaiyan at Kaḻumalam took captive Kaṇaiyan. It is not known from the Ahanāṉūṟu why Paḻaiyan fought against the Confederacy. But in the Naṟṟiṇai it is stated that Paḻaiyan rendered help to the Chōḻas in subduing the Koṅgar.[256] Nannaṉ one among those against whom Paḻaiyaa fought is referred to as Nannan of Koṅkān in the Naṟṟiṇai.[257] It is possible all those

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250 Aham 126
251 Aham 115
252 Puṟam 24
253 Aham 45, 126, 145
254 Aham 326, 186
255 Aham 44
256 Naṟṟiṇai 10
257 Naṟṟiṇai 391

who fought against Palaiyan were the people of Koṅkān or the Koṅgar whom the Chōlas wanted to subdue.

Nannan : Nannan was one of the chieftains who are extensively mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu. Nannan was the lord of Pāḻi.[258] Pāḻi was a well fortified town with a brick wall which looked as though it was made of copper.[259] Pāḻi was situated on the Pāḻi mountain which formed a part of the Ēḻil mountain range.[260] Naṟṟiṇai states that Ēḻil hill was in the Koṅkān.[261] Nannan was also the chief of Pāram[262] and Pirambu.[263] Nannan's territory formed the extreme limit of the Tamil country in the north west, for the Ahanānūṟu states, that beyond the Ēḻil range the language of the people was different.[264] In the Ahanānūṟu one of the stanzas mentions Nannan Vēṇmān and states that Viyalūr belonged to him.[265] The term Vēṇmān in Tamil means a chieftain and so Nannan Vēṇmān could be identified with Nannan himself. Nannan was a liberal patron like most of the chieftains of the age. Nannan is described as one who presented the bards with valuable ornaments and elephants without considering their merit and as the one who had attained fame by his liberality.[266] Nannan is credited with a victory over one Piṇdan, possibly a chieftain.[267] Nannan attacked Punnādu and this seems to have brought about the invasion of Pāḻi by Āy Eiyinan.[268] Āy Eiyinan fought against Minili at Pāḻi and lost his life. Minili seems to have been the vassal of Nannan for in the Naṟṟiṇai he is described as guarding the city of Pārm[269] which was one of the possessions of Nannan. It was seen above that Nannan was one among those who fought against Palaiyav and that the death of Palaiyan on the battlefield resulted in a war with Perumpūṭ

258 Aham 15
259 Aham 375
260 Aham 152
261 Naṟṟiṇai 391
262 Aham 152
263 Aham 356
264 Aham 349
265 Aham 97
266 Aham 152, 349
267 Aham 152
268 Aham 396
269 Naṟṟiṇai 265

Senni. Perumpūṭ Senni who has been identified above with Iḷanjēṭ Senni, possibly attacked Nannan's Pāḻi after Paḻaiyan's enemies were defeated at Kaḻumalam. But, when he attacked Pāḻi, Nannan was not in Pāḻi, and Pāḻi was in the possession of the Kōsar. The Kuṟuntogai states that the Kōsar invaded the territory of Nannan and cut off his tutelary tree.[270] In one of the stanzas of the Ahanānūṟu Nannan is stated to have been in a bamboo forest; it is also stated that he emerged from it when his fortress could not withstand the attack of the enemy and re-established his reputation as a warrior.[271] This would mean that Nannan filed from the city of Pāḻi when the Kōsar overran his territory and was taking shelter in the forest when Perumpūṭ Senni attacked Pāḻi. Though the Chōḻa is stated to have destroyed Pāḻi[272] the stanza in question implies that Nannan recovered his fortress Pāḻi. However, Nannan was defeated at Vāgaipperunturai and killed by the Chēra Nārmudichchēral who is stated to have recovered the territory he had lost.[273] This implies that Nannan brought about his own end by conquering the lands belonging to the chera. Paraṇar who has mentioned Nannan, in another place mentions one Nannan Udiyan and associates him also with Pāḻi.[274] As Nannan and Nannan Udiyan are mentioned by the same poet and associated with the same fortress of Pāḻi, Nannan Udiyan could be taken to be the son of Nannan. Perhaps he was grown up enough to assist his father both in war and administration.

Āy Eyinan : Āy Eyinan was known as Veḷiyan Vēṇmān, Āy Eyinan,[275] and also as Adigan.[276] It is stated that when Nannan invaded Punnādu, Āy Eyinan fought against Miñili at Pāḻi and lost his life.[277] Āy Eyinan was perhaps, the ruler of Punnādu If this was true Āy Eyinan for the purpose of diverting the attention of Nannan could have attacked Pāḻi. Āy Eyinan is referred to as one who protected the birds and that when he fell wounded in the battle at Pāḻi, the birds in large numbers gathered in the sky and prevented

270 Kuṟuntogai 73
271 Aham 392
272 Aham 375
273 Aham 199
274 Aham 258
275 Aham 208
276 Aham 142
277 Aham 396

the rays of the sun from hurting Āy Eyinan.[278] Āy Eyinan is described as a kind and generous person who rewarded the bards with tuskers.[279] The reference that the birds hovered over his body and gave him shade, perhaps, indicates his kindness towards all living creatures especially the birds. Nannan is stated to have refused to go to the battle field and see how Āy Eyinan was protected from the heat of the sun.[280] This clearly proves that Āy Eyinan was not the ally of Nannan as some would think[281], but was only the enemy of Nannan.

Miñili : Miñili was the vassal of Nannan and was in charge of Pāram one of the possessions of Nannan.[282] Miñili is stated to have pledged to appease the demon guarding Pāḻi, if he won a victory over Āy Eyinan.[283] Miñili is described as one who had destroyed the forts of the enemies in the Ahanāṉūṟu.[284]

In the Ahanāṉūṟu many other chieftains also figure. But only passing references are made to them by the poets, and so it is not possible to know more about them from the Ahanāṉūṟu. Pēhan one of the famous liberal patrons[285] is mentioned as one who found pleasure in liberality.[286] Naḷḷi also one among the seven vaḷḷals is stated to have presented the Pāṇar and others with decorated chariots and elephants always, as the sky which causes showers.[287] Kadalan was the chief of Viḷangil. He was also a liberal patron and he is stated to have killed elephants in war.[288] Periyan was the lord of Puṟandai or Puṟaiyaṟu on the coast.[289] Erumai was the Lord of Coorg (Kudagu) and he is described as the chief of the Vadugar.[290] He was one of the seven defeated at Ālaṅgānam by Seḻiyan.[291] It becomes evident from this that even the people of

278 Aham 181, 208
279 Aham 208
280 Aham 208
281 K. Gōvindaṉ : Saṅga Kāla Arasar Varisai : VI
282 Naṟṟiṇai 265
283 Aham 142
284 Aham 181
285 Puṟam 158
286 Aham 262
287 Aham 238
288 Aham 81
289 Aham 100; Naṟṟinai : 131
290 Aham 115, 253
291 Aham 36

Coorg were referred to as Vadugar by the Tamils. A chieftain by name Kaḻuvuḷ is stated to have been the chief of Kāmūr which was attacked by fourteen chieftains.[292] Kaḻuvuḷ was the contemporary of Perumcēral Irumporai.[293] Āmūr was guarded by Kodumudi who broke the tusks of the tusker which belonged to the Chēra.[294] Thaḻumban who came to be called by that name, as he received a wound in battle when an elephant trampled on him, was the Lord of Ūnūr, which was a fortified town,[295] Musuṇdai was the lord of Vēmbi, and he is stated to have given to the Pāṇar chariots, along with elephants.[296] Iruṅgōvēṇmān, a chieftain faced defeat at the hands of Seḻiyan at Ālaṅgānam.[297] One Aḷḷaṉ is stated to have been a vassal of Adiyan, who ordered him to conquer territories.[298] Thus we come across many chieftains about whom we get only meagre information.

In addition to the three Tamil kings and the chieftains some people, such as the Kōsar, Mōriyar, Nandar, Thoṇdaiyar, Vadugar and the Āryar are mentioned in the Ahanāṉūṟu. The Kōsar were the people of the Tuḷu country.[299] The Kōsar are described in the Ahanāṉūṟu as truthful, fearless, [301] and famous.[302] Niyamam[303] and Sellūr[304] are stated to have been the towns of Kōsar. The Kōsar were a warlike people. Their faces are stated to have been disfigured by wounds of war.[305] They were in possession of an infantry armed with the Vēl, or spear.[306] That the Kōsar were in possession of a coastal area is evident from one of the stanzas of the Ahanāṉūṟu in which it is stated that the Neydal area of the Kōsar was filled with the smell of fresh toddy.[307] There seems to have been two branches of the Kōsar and they are referred to in the Ahanāṉūṟu as the Mudukōsar, [308] and

292 Aham 135, 365
293 Padiṟṟuppattu : Patigam : 71
294 Aham 159
295 Aham 227, Naṟṟiṇai: 300
296 Aham 249
297 Aham 36
298 Aham 325
299 Aham 15
300 Aham 15, 196
301 Aham 90
302 Aham 205
303 Aham 90
304 Aham 216
305 Aham 90
306 Aham 113
307 Aham 113
308 Aham 262

the Iḷamkōsar.[309] The Silappadikāram refers to the Iḷamkōsar as the people of Koṅgu.[310] The Kōsar of Tuḷu country were perhaps called the Mudukōsar and they should have represented the senior branch of the Kōsar. The Kōsar of the Tuḷu country should have expanded eastward and south eastward and occupied some portions of the Tamil country. The conquest of Koṅgu is an indication of their penetration into the south. The Kōsar appear to have been true to their friends even when the friends became ruined. It is stated that one Ahdai who presented the bards with elephants was protected and established at a well guarded place by the Kōsar, who never forgot their friendship even when their friends got ruined and who rendered help at the time of need even without asking.[311] This reference would imply that Ahdai was a friend of the Kōsar. The help that they are stated to have rendered to Ahdai fits in well with the description of the Kōsar as truthful Kōsar etc. One Ādan Eḻini is described as the chief of Sellūr where the Iḷaṅkōsar sported adorning themselves with garlands of flowers.[312] Two stanzas in the Ahanānūṟu state that the Mudukōsar put out the eyes of the father of a girl by name Anni Miñili and that she sought the help of Titiyan and had them killed by him.[313] In another place in the Ahanāṉūṟu it is stated that Kiḷḷi destroyed the force of the Kōsar with the desire of conquering lands.[314] This Kiḷḷi has been identified above with Kiḷḷivaḷavan and the reference to the war between the Kōsar and the Chōḻas probably implies that the territory of the Kōsar touched the boundary of the Chōḻas, and that the Kōsar made attempts to conquer territories belonging to the Chōḻas. The identification of the Kōsar has been a much debated problem. While scholars like, V. A. Smith[315] and V. R. Rāmachandra Dīkshitar[316] identified the Kōsar with the Satiyapūtas, or Satyaputrās of the Asōkan edicts, Prof. K. A. Nīlakaṇṭa Sāstri is now inclined to think that the two were different from one another and agrees with Prof. Burrow that Satyaputrās could be derived from the Ādiyamāns.[317] Dr. N. Subra-

309 Aham 216
310 Silappdikāram : Uraiperukaṭṭurai
311 Aham 113
312 Aham 216
313 Aham 196, 262
314 Aham 205
315 Early History of India, p. 185 f.n.
316 Indian Culture — The Kōsar — Their place in South Indian History.
317 Comprehensive History of India Vol. 11, p. 500.

maṉiyam discusses the various views regarding the identification of the Kōsar and concludes that the identification of the Kōsar with Satiyaputrās "would appear to be a valid identification in so far as present evidence goes".[318]

The Kōsar are associated with the Mōriyar, or Mauryās in the Ahanānūru. It is stated that when the Kōsar defeated the enemies in battle, to the accompaniment of the sound of the drum, Mōhūr did not submit. Thereupon the new Mōriyas whose army consisted of horses cut the paths across the hills in order that their chariot might cross the mountains.[319] It is clear from this account that the Kōsar were conquering lands and when they could not capture Mōhūr the new Mōriyar came southward making roads across the hills. In another stanza in the Ahanānūṟu it is stated that the Vadugar formed the vanguard when the Mōriyar came southwards with the intention of conquering the lands.[320] It is quite evident from this reference that the Mōriyar themselves invaded the south. The Vadugar who formed the vanguard of the Mōriyas should have been the Kōsar. We find that the people of coorg addressed as Vadugar[321] and so the Kōsar who where the people of the Tuḷu country should have also been called Vadugar. The Kōsar who thus formed the vanguard were therefore only acting on the orders of the Mōriyar when they attacked Mōhūr. Dr. K. K. Piḷḷai is inclined to think that the Mauryas could have subdued the Kōsar in an earlier invasion and that they attacked the south subsequently with the help of the Kōsar.[322] The Padiṟṟuppattu and the Maduraikkañchi mention that one Paḻaiyan was the ruler of Mōhūr.[323] The Mauryan invasion on the Tamil country is evident from the attack on Mōhūr. This invasion should have taken place in the time of Bindusāra, as Chandragupta Maurya is not credited with any conquest in the South and as Asōka is known to have fought only the Kalinga war on the assumption that he waged no wars during the interval between his accession and the Kalinga war. The recognition of the three Tamil

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318 Madras University Journal Vol. XXXIII, January 1962, p. 150.
319 Aham 257
320 Aham 281
321 Aham 253
322 R. P. Sēthu Pillai Commemoration Volume, p. 364.
323 Padiṟṟuppattu: 44 and Patigam 5; Maduraikkanchi 1, 508.

Kingdoms as equals in status by the Mauryan emperor Asōka in his second and thirteenth Rock edicts possibly implies that after conquering Mōhūr the Mauryas instead of following an aggressive policy towards the states in the south adopted a policy of friendliness. The Mauryan invasion of the Tamil country could be placed therefore roughly between 298 B. C. and 272 B. C., the reign period of Bindusāra. The references to the Mauryan invasion are in the past tense and so Māmūlanār the poet who gives the account of the invasion, it is considered could not be taken as having lived, or composed his lyrics at the time of the invasion. Prof. K. A. Nīlakaṇṭa Sāstri remarks, the mention of Nandās and Mauryas in these poems can only be a reference to events long past.[324] On the other hand, Dr. K. K. Pillai thinks that there could not have been much interval between the composition of the lyrics and the actual event.[325]

The Toṇḍaiyar are mentioned in Ahanānūṟu in one of the stanzas. It is stated that the Vēngadam hill was in their territory and that beyond this mountain there was the land of the Vadugar.[326] Māmūlanār who mentions the invasion of the Tamil country by the Mauryas says that the Nandas hid their wealth under the waters of the Ganges at Pātaliputra.[327] Māmūlanār's reference to the wealth of the Nandas and the invasion of the Mauryas can be taken to be historical facts as these references are corroborated by other sources. In the Ahanānūṟu there are references to the Āryans of the north. In one of the stanzas it is stated that the trained she-elephant of the Aryans would bring back a male elephant having trained it to follow her.[328] This practice of the Āryans is in striking contrast to the practice of the Tamils who are stated to have captured elephants in pits dug for the purpose.[329] In two other stanzas the wars between the Āryans and the Kingdoms of the Tamil country are mentioned. In one place it is stated that the Āryans were defeated by the Chōḻas at Vallam, where the Chōḻas had a fort.[330] These references unmistakably indicate the expansion of the Āryans into the south and the consequent struggle between the

324 Comprehensive History of India. Vol. II, p. 501.
325 R. P. Sethu Pillai Commemoration Vol. p. 362.
326 Aham 213
327 Aham 265
328 Aham 276
329 Aham 211
330 Aham 336

Āryans of the North and the Tamils of the South. In another stanza Imayavaramban is stated to have become furious and attacked the Āryan rulers. In the same stanza he is stated to have imprinted the bow emblem on the famous and ancient mount Himālayas.[331] This would mean, that the Tamils not only tried to arrest the intrusion of the Āryans into the south, but also took expeditions to the north to make an impression of their military might on the Āryans. The Vadugar are mentioned in a number of places in the Ahanānūṟu. The term Vadugar which means Northerners would include all the people who were to the North of the Tamil country and therefore it is not possible to say exactly who they were. But some of the characteristics of the Vadugar can be known from the Ahanānūṟu The Vadugar are stated to have been illiterates, who had ferocious hounds.[332] In another place they are referred to as having relished drinking toddy and that in their land a different language was spoken.[333] It is clear from these references, that the Vadugar were illiterates, and that they were perhaps hunters chiefly, as they are said to have used hounds.

War: The history of the Three Tamil Kingdoms and the chieftains sketched above reveals that there were frequent wars between the Kings, between the chieftains, and sometimes between a king on the one side and the other two kings, and a number of chieftains on the other side, as happened at Veṇṇi and Talaiyālangānam. These frequent wars should have filled the country with disorder and affected agriculture and trade, though there is no reference in the Ahanānūṟu to such a state of affairs. The absence of such a reference, perhaps, implies that the wars were not destructive in nature and that the actual fighting took place between the contending forces and that the civil population was least affected and therefore, the normal avocations of the people continued unaffected, though there could not have been scope for further development. Perhaps most of the battles were fought in the Neydal or littoral region. This is inferred from the Tolkappiam which states that the Neydal region was suited for waging wars (Tol. Pora: sutral: 70). The Tamils also maintained the four divisions of the army, viz., the infantry, cavalry, elephnat

331 Aham 396
332 Aham 107
333 Aham 295
334 Aham 105, 113
335 Aham 143

corps and the chariot. The Tamils used in war the spear[334] the sword [335] and the bow and arrow [336] as offensive weapons and the shield made of leather as defensive weapon.[337] Añji and Naḻḻi possessed an infantry.[338] Similarly Tittan and Eḻini possessed cavalry force.[339] Nannan maintained an elephant corps.[340] Kāri and Kōsar were specially famous for the chariots they owned.[341] But it is not clear whether the chariot was used in war. If it was used, it should have been used by the Kings and the other chieftains only and not by the lower ranks in the army. The towns or capitals of the rulers had fortifications. Kodumudi's Āmūr was surrounded by a high wall.[342] The rulers established garrisons at various places, possibly for the sake of maintaining their sway over the conquered territory Seṅguṭṭuvan established, wherever he desired, garrisons in which there were soldiers who spoke different languages.[343] The soldiers in the garrison could have been the yavanas, as they are said to have spoken different languages. In the forests the Maṟavar had their own forts, from which they killed the passers by and secured their wealth.[344] The walls of the forts seem to have been built with well burnt bricks. Pāḻi is stated to have had fortifications of burnt bricks so as to make it appear as though it was made of copper.[345] During war the forts of the enemy were destroyed.[346] At times the forts were so strong that the enemy had to carry on siege for a long time. Pāri's fort with stood the siege for a number of years.[347] The soldiers started for war after seeing the good omen of the birds.[348] The war was fought while the war drum was sounded.[349] It was the practice to cut off the tutelary tree of the enemy and make out of it a war drum. Anni is said to have felled the tutelary Punnai tree of Titiyan at Kuṟukkai paṟantalai and Imayavaramban is said to have made a war drum out of it.[350] It was the practice to seek the help of the spirits while attempting to capture the enemy's fort or land. Miñili is stated to have pledged to feed the demon of Pāḻi, if he succeeded in the battle

336 Aham 372
337 Aham 24, 67
338 Aham 152, 372
339 Aham 105, 122
340 Aham 142
341 Aham 35, 251
342 Aham 159
343 Aham 212
344 Aham 87, 89
345 Aham 375
346 Aham 69
347 Aham 78
348 Aham 207
349 Aham 251
350 Aham 45, 347

against Āy Eyinan.[351] The victor in battle seized the valuable belongings of the enemy. Seḻiyan of Ālaṅgānam seized the royal umbrellas and war drums of the enemy, when he gained a victory over seven of his enemies.[352] The same Seḻiyan carried away a statue when he destroyed Musiri.[353] Kiḷḷivaḷavan also seized horses and elephants belonging to the Pāṇḍya Paḻaiyan Māran at Kūdal.[354] If in course of fighting a warrior was wounded on the back it was considered shameful and those who received such wounds, starved themselves to death, sitting on the battle field facing the North; Perumcēralātaṉ who got wounded on the back at Veṇṇi died in such a manner.[355] At times much humiliation was done to the defeated enemy. Matti, is stated to have set the fallen teeth of Eḻini on the gates of Veṇmaṇi[356] The victor received from the enemy tributes consisting of valuable articles. Imayavaramban Nedumcēralātan received from those whom he subdued, valuable ornaments, diamonds and a gold image of a girl.[357] It was also the practice to seize the cows and calves of the enemy before their towns were attacked.[358] Imayavaramban Nedumcēralātan is stated to have driven his enemies on the sea.[359] This would imply the maintenance of a navy, without which it would have been impossible to defeat the enemies on the sea. One of the stanzas of the Ahanānūṟu would imply that the practice of duelling was also prevalent in the Tamil country during the Saṅgam Age. Pāṇan is said to have wrestled with one Āriya Porunan and to have crushed his shoulders.[360]

Administration : In the Ahanānūṟu there is scarcely any information relating to the administrative system of the country and political ideals, as the theme of Ahanānūṟu is love. However, a few pieces of information on political conditions appear, here and there in the anthology. In one of the stanzas Ādi Mandi is stated to have searched her husband, Atti by going from town, (ūr) to town and country (Nādu) to country.[361] This implies that the country (Nādu) was a bigger political division and that it should have comprised of many towns. (ūr). In another place it is stated that the scandal of a hero and

351 Aham 142
352 Aham 36
353 Aham 149
354 Aham 346
355 Aham 55
356 Aham 211
357 Aham 127
358 Aham 101, 129
359 Aham 127
360 Aham 386
361 Aham 236

heroine meeting secretly had spread throughout the chēris and town.[362] From this reference it can be pointed out that towns were bigger divisions than the chēris (wards) and that the towns were made up of a number of chēris. This conclusion is confirmed by another reference in the Ahanānūṟu which states that the heroine left her home causing Alar (scandal) to spread in the chēris (wards) and town and that she passed through a number of Nadūs and Dēyams with the hero.[363] It is evident that the chēri was smaller than the town, the town smaller than the Nādu and the Nādu smaller than the Dēyam. The term dēyam is used at other places to indicate the lands where the language was different, such as the Vadugar dēyam.[364] Therefore dēyam should be taken to mean the land of a people such as the Tamils and Nādu should be taken as a state, such as, the Chōḻa, Chēra and Pāṇdya states. Hence in the Tamil country the highest political division was the Nādu and the Nādu comprised of cities[365] and towns and the towns in their turn were divided into wards or chēris.

362 Aham 220
363 Aham 383
364 Aham 295
365 Aham 205

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Caste :

Society, in the Tamil country, in the Saṅgam Age showed many points of difference from society in other parts of India, which were more thoroughly Āryanised. By the time of the Saṅgam Age, the Tamil country had developed a high culture. We cannot say when exactly this culture began to develop and how it grew up to the level it had attained in the Saṅgam Age. It is evident from the Saṅgam literature that contact with the north had developed long before the age of the literature. Though Āryan influence is discernible and the blend of Āryan and non-Āryan cultures is clear, yet the persistence and continuance of the pre-Āryan customs, practices and ideas is distinct. The caste system of the Āryan north has no similarity in the Tamil country of the Saṅgam Age. There were, on the other hand, divisions in society based on occupations and therefore, they may well be designated as occupational groups, rather than castes.

The Tolkāppiam refers to four classes — Arasar, Andaṇar, Vaṇigar and Vēḷḷāḷar.[1] Though this class division resembles that of the caste system of the north, yet in this division of society there is no class which can be said to correspond to the Sūdra caste. The Vēḷḷāḷar, who are mentioned as the fourth class, unlike the Sūdras, who formed the fourth caste among the Āryans, were the landed gentry[2] next in rank to the class of Arasar. The Kshatriyas, who formed the warrior caste among the Āryans, cannot be equated with the class of Arasar. In the Tamil country the warrior class is called the Maravar[3] or Maḻavar[4] and these are different from the class of Arasar. Again in the Tamil country the Vaisyas are represented by several classes of people. In the Āryan society, the caste system was based on occupation and the desire to maintain

[1] Tol. Porul: Sūtrās 32 and 142, 615, 616, 622, 625

[2] *Ibid.* Sūtrās : 625

[3] Aham 75

[4] Aham 1. 35

purity of blood. In the Tamil country, on the other hand, social divisions were based on occupations which had close relationship with the natural divisions of the land. The Tamils divided the land into five natural regions, the Kuriñchi or the mountainous terrain, Mullai or the forest, Marudam or the fertile plain, Pālai, the dry land, and Neydal the coastal region.[5] The chief occupation of the people of the Kuriñchi region was hunting and the people of this region were called the Vēṭṭuvar[6] or Kuravar[7]. That there were sub-divisions among the classes is clear from the distinction made between Vēṭṭuvar and Kuravar, both belonging to the mountainous terrain.[8] In the forest area of Mullai the people were mostly cowherds and they went by the names Āyar[9], Idaiyar[10], and Kōvalar.[11] The people of the fertile cultivable tract, the Marudam, took to agriculture and were called the Uḻavar.[12] The people of the littoral region on the other hand carried on fishing in the deep sea and the rivers and they were the Paradavar.[13] In the dryland, comparable to the desert, the people who lived there could carry on no other occupation but highway robbery on those who dared to pass through that region on various errands and this class of highwaymen were termed the Kaḷvar[14] or Maṟavar[15] the latter term being applied to them as they wielded the bow and the arrow. It is evident from the above description that the natural regions of the land determined the occupation of the people, and the occupation, their class, and status in society.

One poem in the Puṟanānūṟu[16] affirms that there were four kudis or classes of people, viz. the tudiyan, pāṇan, paṟaiyan and kadamban in society. But we have seen that the Tolkāppiam also mentions another category of four classes, viz. the Arasar, Andaṇar, Vaṇigar and Vēḷḷāḷar. This need not subscribe to the view that

5 Tol. Porul: Sūtrā 5, 11
6 Aham 28
7 Aham 182
8 Naṟṟiṇai 276
9 Puṟam 390
10 Aham 274
11 Aham 54
12 Aham 41
13 Aham 210
14 Aham 7
15 Aham 53
16 Puṟam 335

the picture in the Tolkāppiam appears to be that of a slightly later epoch than that of the Saṅgam classics. It thus goes without saying that Tolkāppiam also presents a picture of the Tamil society based on a four fold classification of society, though this classification seems to belong to a society more sophisticated than the one which rests on the Puṟam classification of Kadamban etc.

Tolkāppiam, while explaining the five fold aspects of love affirms that this five fold aspect of love was not to be seen among the servile classes.[17] Iḷampūraṇar, the commentator of Tolkāppiam says that the lower classes were devoid of natural reserve and shyness and hence the five fold aspect of love did not apply to them.[18] It requires no stretch of imagination to say that there were certain servile classes which were considered to belong to the lower strata of society. The term Kadaisiyar[19] would indicate that these people were at the bottom of the social scale.

The situation of Kaḷvu or clandestine love like any other in Ahapporuḷ is idealised and the convention is that the lovers shall be equal in status, attainments etc., In a poem in Naṟṟiṇai the confidante of the heroine of the Neydal region tells the hero who belonged to a higher class that love between her companion and the hero would not be viewed with favour.[20] This would make one think that the endogamous marriage was the normal rule and exogamy was not viewed with favour.

Status of Women :

Treatment of love in Ahanānūṟu :

In Ahanānūṟu also we meet the literary conventions relating to the Aham theme set forth in the Tolkāppiam. Tolkāppiam treats of the Aham theme or Ahattiṇai under Poruḷ Adikāram. It would appear that the five natural regions of the land were each suitable for a particular course or behaviour of love, Kuriñchi for Puṇarthal or the natural coming together of man and woman ; (according to the Sanskrit convention it is the Gāndharvā system of

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17 Tol. Porul: Sūtrā 25, 26
18 Tol. Porul: Sūtrā 25
19 Puṟam 61
20 Naṟṟiṇai 45

marriage) Mullai for Iruttal, or the state of awaiting the lover; Marudam for ūdal, or petty quarrel among the lovers; Neydal for Irangal, or the state of bemoaning the lover's absence and Pālai for Pirithal or separation.[21] The five phases of love have their appropriate seasons and periods of the day: for Kurinchi, the Kūtir or autumn and yāmam, or the second part of the night; for Mullai, the Kār or winter and Mālai, the first part of the night; for Marudam all seasons and last part of the night and dawn; for Neydal all seasons and Yerpadu, or afternoon; and for Pālai the spring and summer, and noon.[22]

The Tamils of the Sangam Age believed in the natural coming together of man and woman It was common for a lad and a maid to meet each other outside their houses by some chance and begin to love each other. After their first meeting and love at first sight they met very often secretly at different places. This practice of the lovers was recognised by the Tamils as Kaḷavu, or secret union. The meeting of the lovers happened in the first instance when the girl went out to pick flowers or to keep watch over the field just before harvest time[23] A Poem in the Ahanānūṟu describes how a group of girls while picking the flowers of Vēngai tree raise the cry "Puli, Puli" or "tiger, tiger" which noise brings in a youth and attracts his attention towards the heroine and how that makes the heroine pine for the lover.[24] The secret union of the lovers which the Tamils named as Kaḷavu may be said to correspond to the Ghandarva form of marriage among the Āryans.[25] But whereas in the Ghandarva form of marriage, there is no marriage ritual and the marriage is taken to have been gone through, in Kaḷavu there is no consummation of marriage. It was only a prelude to actual marriage and a marriage ceremony was required for the consummation of the marriage Kaḷavu was then similar to courtship which precedes marriage.

During the period of Kaḷavu the confidante of the heroine helps the lovers to meet secretly She will indirectly inform the hero where he could meet his ladylove and when. The introduction of

21 Tol. Porul: Sūtrā 16
22 Ibid. Sūtrā 6 to 12
23 Aham 32
24 Aham 48
25 Tol. Porul Sūtrā 89

the confidante of the heroine in almost all the portraits of the poets has led some scholars to conclude that Kaḷavu was prevalant only among the higher classes in society which could afford to have attendants. But from the pen picture of the poets it is evident that they introduce companions to the hero and the heroine in accordance with the literary convention that had developed by their time. It should not be taken that in actual life every hero and heroine had a companion. This realisation would help us to think that Kaḷavu was not confined to the higher classes alone. The companion would, when the time comes indirectly inform the parents of the girl about the heroine's love sickness. She would also exhort the hero who finds pleasure in the secret union to take the necessary steps to get the hand of his lady love in marriage. In some cases the companion of the heroine would point out the unsuitability of a marriage between the heroine who is poor and the hero who is wealthy.[26] The companion is portrayed in many of the poems as the one who consoles the heroine when she bewails the separation of the hero, or when she feels disappointed when the hero had not returned at the appointed time.

After this secret meeting the hero would for the purpose of leading a married life and for getting the fair hand of his love, go in search of a fortune. This would cause much agony and unhappiness to the heroine. She would not take milk[27] or play with her companions[28] and would appear sunken and sullen. Only then her parents would notice the change that had come over her. The mother not knowing the cause for the change in her daughter used to invite the sooth-sayers and ask them to find out the cause. The sooth-sayers unable to realise the truth would say that the change was caused by Murugā. The unsuspecting mother taking the words of the sooth-sayers to be true used to arrange for Vēlan Ādal for the purpose of appeasing God Murugā, so that her daughter might recoup the former beauty and health.[29] On the other hand, if the mother understood the real cause of the change in her daughter she would tell her that she was not still young and that she has grown

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26 Naṟṟiṇai 45
27 Aham 48
28 Aham 49
29 Aham 98

into a maid and therefore should not go out of the house with her companions as the region was full of spirits capable of doing harm to her.[30] The heroine thus prevented from leaving the house would long for the company of the hero. It is then that the confidante would help the lovers to meet and would also impress on the hero the need for hastening the marriage between the lovers.[31] She would sometimes make the parents of the heroine feel that the heroine was in love with the hero and take steps to get her married to the man she loved.[32]

When the heroine was prevented from meeting her lover she sometimes eloped with her lover. Elopement seems to have been recognised by the Tamils of the Saṇgam Age as a permissible and legitimate practice; it sometimes led to the return of the lovers home and their marriage afterwards. In the Ahanānūṟu a mother does not feel sorry for the elopement of her daughter. She only wishes that her lover be kind and sweet to her through out their journey to a place of their choice.[33] In another stanza a mother wishes that throughout their journey they should be shown hospitality as in the Tuḷu country, by the people on their way.[34] The lovers used to marry after reaching the hero's place or they would return to the heroine's house and get married. The practice of the lovers returning home after sometime and the parental readiness to take them into the family is clear from the Ahanānūṟu. A mother decorates the outer wall of the house with red sand paste and spreads sand in front of the house. Flower garlands are also hung at the entrance in the expectation of the return of the lovers.[35] The mother of a heroine, who had eloped with her lover wonders whether the hero would take the heroine to his house or bring her back to her own house.[36] It is then clear that elopement, far from being despised, was socially accepted.

In some cases the secret meetings of the lovers became known to the people in the neighbourhood and they began to talk openly about their meetings in such a way as to cause a slur on the

30 Aham 7
31 Aham 12
32 Aham 48
33 Aham 35
34 Aham 15
35 Ibid. 195
36 Ibid. 195

character of the heroine. This loose talk was called "Ambal" or "Alar". This loose talk would make the parents of the heroine keep a strict watch over her and prevent her from leaving the house to meet her lover. This loose talk sometimes spread from the chēri or suburb to the whole village and the village in which such loose talk spread throughout was termed Ambal Mūdūr[37] and the womenfolk who indulged in such scandal were termed as Alar-vaippeṇdir.[38] This loose talk would make the father of the heroine agree to give his daughter in marriage to the man she loved and this approval of the choice by the father would hush up the loose talk.[39]

At times, the hero would not succeed in getting the fair hand he loved. This may be due to the refusal of the parents of the heroine to accept him as a match to their daughter. In Aham 282 the father is said to have accepted to offer his daughter in marriage to the hero. The mother of the heroine is said to have expressed the satisfaction that the hero was fit enough to marry her daughters. This reference would imply that there were instances of refusal to give their daughter in marriage to the hero. The hero would then have recourse to the practice called Madalēṛutal, among the Tamils. The hero would adorn himself with a garland or Yerukku flowers and ride on an artificial horse made of Palmyrah stems and leaves. By so doing he would try to invoke the sympathy of the public and at the same time give expression to his sincere love for the heroine. The hero would thus bring pressure on the parents of the heroine to give their daughter in marriage to him.

Marriage :

The lovers who had been meeting secretly were united in wedlock by a marriage ceremony. But before the marriage was celebrated the bridegroom or his relatives had to approach the parents of the girl and get their formal consent for the marriage.[40] This formal consent seems to have been obtained by the payment of a bride-price. This bride-price was paid to deck the girl in orna-

[37] Aham 218

[38] Ibid. 218

[39] Ibid. 282

[40] Aham 288

ments of gold. That the sum paid was considerable is evident from the reference in one of the poems of the Ahanānūṟu, wherein it is said that the parents of the girl would not agree for the marriage even if the prosperous city of the Kōsar. Niyamam was given for adorning the girl in gold ornaments.[41] It may be said that for getting married one had to pay a considerable amount either in cash or in kind,[42] and this was the cause for the hero's separation from his love prior to the marriage, as he wanted to be in a position to pay the bride-price. In this connection it may be noted that there is no reference in the Ahanānūṟu or in any other Saṅgam work to any dowry being given at the time of the marriage.

The marriage was celebrated at an auspicious time on an auspicious day. The period approaching the full moon day and the season in which the Vēṅgai tree blossomed were considered auspicious times for the marriage. The day on which the star "Rōhiṇi" was in conjunction with the moon was an auspicious day for the marriage.[43] The marriage ceremony was performed early in the morning on such an auspicious day. On the day of the marriage both the bridegroom and the bride put on new clothing and decorated themselves in a fitting manner for the occasion.[44] The bride wore a new saree on the day of the marriage and adorned herself in choice ornaments.[45] That the way in which both the bridegroom and the bride dressed and decorated themselves on the day of the marriage was peculiar is evident from a reference in the Ahanānūṟu wherein a harlot is said to have dressed and adorned herself as for a marriage.[46] On the day of the marriage the bride was given a bath by some elderly ladies who took part in the marriage.[47]

Before the marriage the bride was made to discard the anklet she was wearing, perhaps from her younger days. This practice was known to the Tamils of the Saṅgam Age as "Silambu kaḻi Nōnbu".[48] This should not be taken to mean that the girl did not wear an

[41] Aham 90, 280
[42] Naṟṟnar 300
[43] Aham 136
[44] Aham 66
[45] Aham 86
[46] Aham 56
[47] Aham 136
[48] Aham 315, 369, 385

anklet after the marriage was over. In Silappadikāram the heroine Kaṇṇagi and the Pāṇdya queen Kōpperundēvi are said to have worn anklets even after they got married. Then it may be said that before the marriage the old anklet was removed and after the marriage a different kind of anklet was worn by the lady.

The Ahanāṉūṟu gives a description of how the Tamils celebrated their marriage. The marriage was performed under the cool shade of a specially erected structure supported by a number of poles; on the floor of the structure sand was spread. The lamp was lighted and the place was beautified by hanging garlands of flower.[49] In such a surrounding the bridegroom seized the forearm of the bride which was extended to him by the parents of the bride, as a mark of accepting her as his partner[50] in life. Then helped by aged married women who carried on their head a mud pot and in their hand a flat mud vessel, four women blessed the bride by sprinkling on her head water with grains or paddy and the two petaled "Alari" flowers, that she should be an ideal partner to her husband.[51] In another poem it is seen that the marriage ceremony was begun after invoking a God or Goddess.[52] The marriage was performed to the accompaniment of the beating of the sweet marriage drum and the war drum.[53] On the occasion of the marriage the guests were provided with breakfast and lunch. Rice cooked with blackgram seems to have been served for the breakfast in the morning when the marriage was celebrated.[54] For the lunch rice cooked with mutton and plenty of ghee seems to have been provided.[55] In addition distilled toddy was served as a drink.[56] The marriage was mostly conducted in the house of the bride.[57] The consummation of the marriage was attained on the night of the day on which the marriage took place.[58] This would indicate that the consummation was made part of the ritual. This practice of consummation on the day of the marriage is still to be seen among the Tamils.

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49 Aham 86
50 Aham 349; Kurinchippattu 11. 231 to 232
51 Aham 86
52 Aham 136
53 Aham 66, 136, 397
54 Aham 86
55 Aham 136
56 Aham 221
57 Aham 369
58 Aham 86, 136

It will be interesting to note that in the celebration of the marriage, that is recorded in Ahanānūṟu, no brahman priest was employed and that there were no elaborate rituals, as in the case of the Āryars of the north. The marriage ceremony was simple and did not take much time except perhaps for the feeding of the large number of guests. But the Tolkāppiam refers to the use of rituals in the marriages and also says that the practice of the parents of the bride giving her away to the bridegroom in the ritualistic way was introduced, when lack of fidelity and deceitfulness on the part of the menfolk become common.[59] The Ahanānūṟu, in one of the poems, gives expression to such lack of fidelity on the part of a man and points out that the man was tied to a tree and that water was poured on his head as a punishment.[60] The adoption of the rituals was, perhaps, a later development and the picture that we get in Tolkāppiyam belongs to a different stratum of society from the one portrayed in Ahanānūṟu.

It is also interesting to note that there is no mention in any of the poems of the Ahanānūṟu, which describe the celebration of the marriage to the tying of the Tali by the bridegroom around the neck of the bride, which practice is so common and sacred among the Tamils today. But the Ahanānūṟu speaks of a Pulippal Tāli worn by a maid before she eloped with her lover.[61] This raises a doubt whether it was the practice to have the Tāli even before the marriage. But it is clear from other Saṅgam classics that the Pulippal Tāli was worn even by boys[62] and that therefore it was a kind of ornament worn both by men and women. Talayālaṅgānattu Neduñ-seḻiyan is described as the one who had not discarded the Aympadai Tāli, which was worn by children to ward of evil spirits.[63] Tāli would then mean an ornament worn round the neck and there must have been different such ornaments worn round the neck. A poem in the Puṟanāṉūṟu makes it clear that the married women wore an ornament that could not be given away as present to any one even by their husbands.[64] This inseparable ornament would have been the Tāli that is considered sacred even today. Even in the Silappadikāram

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59 Tol. Karp. Sutra 4
60 Aham 256
61 Aham 7
62 Puram 374
63 Puram 77
64 Puram 127

Kappagi is said to have worn the sacred ornament only, when Kōvalan had deserted her and was in the company of Mādhavi. This also confirms beyond doubt that the married women were distinguished from the others by the wearing of an ornament around the neck and that this ornament was considered indispensable. Why then there is no mention about such an ornament being worn by the lady, who got married or to the tying of any kind of ornament by the bridegroom on the occasion of the marriage? It may be that the tying of the Tāil was common among sophisticated society which had rituals also in the marriage ceremony. The practice of adorning the bride with some ornament gifted by the bridegroom or his family could have brought about the practice of tying the tāli. (It was seen above that the term tāli meant only an ornament worn around the neck.) This would mean that the picture we get from Purananūru relates to a different stratum of society.

Parattaiyar :

After the marriage some of the menfolk took to concubinage and deserted their wives for a short time. The presence of the courtesans, who were known to the Tamils as Parattaiyar, is evident from a number of poems in the Ahanānūru. The Parattaiyar were distinguished from one another as Kādal Parattai, Irparattai, and Nayapparattai.[65] Among these Kādal Parattai seems to have lived with a man whom she enticed,[66] whereas the Chēripparattai flirted with many. The menfolk seem to have been attracted by the beauty, the youthfulness, make up and the skill of the Parattai to please them by dancing, singing and bathing in the freshet of the river.[67] This indulgence on the part of the menfolk appears to have happened when the wife had given birth to a child and in consequence had lost her youthful vigour and beauty.[68] In society, the Pāņan and the Virali were used as go betweens by menfolk to get at the Parattaiyar.[69] The Pāņan and Virali not only helped the husband of a lady to obtain the company of the Parattaiyar but also helped him to rejoin his wife when he so desired by acting as mediators. However, the wife as well as her companion at times refused to be convinced by the

65 Aham 336, 376
66 Aham 396
67 Aham 6, 76, 96 326
68 Aham 6, 26, 56
69 Aham 346, 206

pleas of the Pāṇan and Virali and the husband was refused admission into the house.[70] In one of the poems the wife refused even to touch the husband, who had associated himself with the Parattai.[71] However, the menfolk tried to convince their wives about their fidelity towards their wives. A husband exclaims "if it is true that I played in the freshet with the Parattai, let the Goddess who is pleased by sacrifices punish me".[72] The wives whose hearts were tender and who still cherished their love for their husbands yielded to such entreaties and admitted their husbands back into their houses.[73] The wives, at times openly expressed their indignation towards the Parattaiyar who had enticed their husbands.[74] In turn the Parattaiyar tried to hit back and sow seeds of discord between the husband and wife so that the husband might desert his wife for ever. In one of the poems of the Ahanānūṟu a Parattai is seen taking a walk in the street where the wife of her lover was residing, swinging the hands as to make the bangles on the wrist produce a rattling sound so that the wife might feel hurt.[75] The Parattaiyar had to face not only the rivalry of the wife of the man but also the rivalry of the other Parattaiyar who were keen on enticing and separating the man from the other Parattaiyar.[76] The Parattaiyar expressed their jealousy and disappointment, when the man left them and sought the company of other Parattaiyar, by breaking into pieces their bangles.[77] The Parattaiyar were devoid of the sense of shame and modesty and were determined to prevent the man from going back to his wife. In one of the poems of the Ahanānūṟu, a Parattai declares that she would not be ashamed to seize the man when he came to her cheri by his garland and dress and drag him to her house having tied his shoulder with her tresses, like a trained she-elephant of the Āryans which would get a male elephant with her.[78] In another poem the Parattai declares that even if the man's wife held him tightly just as the Kāviri hid Atti, the husband of Ādi Mandi, she would bring him back.[79]

[70] Aham 140, 206, 46, 116
[71] Aham 196
[72] Aham 166
[73] Aham 26, 236
[74] Aham 76
[75] Aham 106
[76] Aham 336
[77] Aham 186, 336
[78] Aham 276
[79] Aham 396

The poems of the Ahanānūṟu which mention theactivities of the Parattaiyar would go to show that harlotry had become a recognised institution among the Tamils of the Saṅgam Age. But this should not be taken to mean that the menfolk were devoid of any moral conduct and that harlotry was not candemned by the people of the age. The very purpose for which the poets painted the picture of harlotry was to give expression to the evil practice and condemn it as unseemly behaviour. Cohabitation with the Parattaiyar was characterised as improper love or love that was not befitting a gentleman.[80] In the Ahanānūṟu itself we have poems which exhibit the steadfast love of the husbands for their wives. A husband tells his wife after his return that while he was away his body alone was in that place while his soul was all along with the wife.[81] In another poem the husband explains how he thought of his wife even in the midst of his search for wealth in a far off place.[82] In a still another poem a husband in a soliloquy expresses that he would not depart from his wife even if he were to get wealth equal in value to the country that was recovered by Nāṟmudichchēṟal by defeating Nannan at Vāgaipperunturai.[83] When the wife felt unhappy due to delay in her husband's return the confidante consoles her saying that the husband would not stay away from her even if he were to get Āmūr which was ably guarded by Kodumudi.[84] These instances would go to prove that though the institution of harlots was well established, yet the menfolk were not totally devoid of morality and that they were very much devoted to their wives, whom they valued much more than any kind of wealth.

The Ahanānūṟu gives expression to some of the customs of the people of the age. It was the practice of the wives to make marks on the wall every day to keep count of the number of days their husbands were away from the house for the purpose of earning a fortune.[85] Again it was the custom among the unmarried girls to worship the crescent.[86] It was supposed that married women would not worship any but their husbands. In society if the man who loved a girl and had been in the practice of meeting her secretly, proved unfaithful

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80 Kural: 914, 915, 916
81 Aham 29
82 Aham 39
83 Aham 199
84 Aham 159
85 Ibid. 61, 289, 351
86 Ibid. 239

and exclaimed that he knew not the girl then he was tied to a tree and water was poured on his head as a punishment for his infidelity.[87]

Ideals of the Householder :

The Tamils of the Sangam age had high Ideals in life. They sought wealth not for its own sake but for being generous and hospitable to others. The householder deemed it his duty to be charitable to the poor,[88] to help his relatives when they were in distress, to entertain guests and to make his friends feel that he was amiable and that he would treat them also as his kith and kin.[89] This sense of moral obligation to serve the poor and the dependants goaded the householder to leave the house and his beloved and go to a far off place, where he could gain wealth. One had to be strong willed, energetic and enterprising to be able to amass wealth.[90] An idle man who had not the strong will to leave his wife behind was looked upon with disfavour, as he would not be in a position to discharge the duties expected of him. The people looked down upon the miser also as he hid his wealth and prevented it from being of any use to others.[91] Though the householder desired wealth for the sake of being helpful to others, he would not be eager to gain wealth by foul means.[92] It was a general belief among the Tamils that if one did good to others nothing that was evil would affect him in life.[93] Those, who did not care to look after their relatives, who were poor and from whom they had received help, and sought the company of the rich, were condemned as ungrateful.[94] The wife shared with the husband the pleasure of giving charity to the poor and of entertaining guests. That the wife found pleasure in such duties is evident from one of the poems of the Ahanānūru.[95] Every wife like Caesar's was expected to be above suspicion and chastity was equated with divinity and the chaste woman was regarded as a

87 Ibid. 256
88 Ibid. 69
89 Ibid. 93
90 Ibid. 173, 231, 279
91 Ibid. 276
92 Ibid. 112
93 Ibid. 101
94 Ibid. 71
95 Ibid. 51

goddess.[96] The son was considered as the light of the family.[97] It was thought, that those who begot lovable childern, would win fame in this world and eternal happiness in the other world.[98] Marital life was characterised by the chastity of the housewife and the loving care of the husband. This picture of an ideally united family has its qualifications. It may be mentioned that the society which made rigid rules about female chastity and thought fit to raise a temple for the lady of chastity gave a margin of delinquency in the case of married men, eg. Kōvalan. We do not come across with the ideal of Ekapattni vrata. Monogamy was not applicable to the man of the age. While the kural condemns cohabitation with the courtesans,[99] Aham is full of delightful narratives about the courtesans joyously setting about their job.

Food :

The Ahanānūṟuincidentally throws much light on the food habits of the people. We get an idea of the kind of food consumed by the rich and the poor and by the people of the different natural regions of the land. There is a description of the feast provided to the paṇar in the city of Uṟandai. Mutton roasted in fire and cooked Tiṇai rice were served in a hollow vessel. Along with it Aval (beaten rice) cooked in sugarcane juice and milk was also provided to the Paṇar. Such a rich food was consumed in the cities by the rich.[100] Gold cups which were fitted with precious stones were used by the rich for drinking miḻk.[101] The Uḻavar (the agricultural class) consumed a kind of gruel made of pulses cooked in milk. They also drank the sour toddy in which they had soaked the unripe mango and which they had stored in new pots.[102] The Paradavar ate cooked rice with a sauce of Aiyilai fish prepared by adding tamarind.[103] They also consumed rice flour mixed with curd.[104] In one of the poems a girl of the Neydal region

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96 Ibid. 114, 181
97 Ibid. 184
98 Ibid. 66
99 Kural : 914, 915, 916
100 Aham 237
101 Ibid. 105
102 Ibid. 37
103 Ibid. 60
104 Ibid. 340

tells that the food consisting of fish preparation was not rich enough to be given to a guest.[105] The cowherds were accustomed to take rice cooked by adding tamarind.[106] One of the poems of the Ahanānūṟu describes how the cowherds prepared their food. The Varagu rice was pounded and then the chaff was winnowed away. The cowherds used triangular stone props as the oven and cooked the Varagu rice in a mud vessel. This cooked rice was added to cow's milk and was consumed.[107] They were also accustomed to consume the Varagu which was sometimes cooked in curd and to which was added tamarind and the white ants which came out of the holes in the earth due to the rains.[108] The Vēṭṭuvar ate rice cooked with mutton.[109] They seem to have consumed venison also besides the mutton.[110] A kind of toddy made by mixing mango Juice, jack fruit juice and honey was drunk by some. This drink was preserved in bamboo barrels and kept for a long time so that it may get fermented. It was such a strong drink that its effect on men has been compared to that of the poison of the snake, which would render one unconscious.[111] The Pāṇar who were poor consumed a simple diet. Their food consisted of rice cooked with a kind of gooseberry which was sweet and also sour.[112] Sometimes the Varal and other kinds of fish were roasted in fire and eaten.[113] It was not uncommon for the Pāṇan to eat the flesh of the elephant killed in battle.[114]

It is clear from such descriptions that rice and millets formed the staple food of the people. That they were accustomed to use milk and milk products is also clear from the various poems which make passing reference to the dietary habits of the people. That the people were used to drinking toddy of different varieties becomes clear from a number of poems. Toddy was distilled out of tinai,[115] and the juice of the jack fruit mixed with mango juice

105 Ibid. 110
106 Ibid. 311
107 Ibid. 393
108 Ibid. 394
109 Ibid. 172
110 Ibid. 284
111 Ibid. 348
112 Ibid. 196
113 Ibid. 216
114 Ibid. 106
115 Ibid. 284

and honey was a superior kind of fermented drink. The habit of drinking milk with honey is evident from a number of poems.[116] The food was served on large teak wood leaves or Āmbal leaves.[117] Cups made of dried leaves were perhaps used for drinking gruel.[118] The practice of putting ghee on food served hot is also evident from a poem.[119] It may be said that though the food consumed by the people was simple, yet there was variety. The people were also accustomed to eating fruits such as the jack fruit.[120]

Dress :

Both men and women wore clothes called Kaliṅgam by the Tamils.[121] It is not clear whether this dress was made of cotton, silk or wool. In the Puṟanānūṟu there is a reference to the women spinning cotton.[122] In view of this it may be taken that the Kaliṅgam was a cotton clothing. Ahanānūṟu abounds in references to the use of garments made of leaves. The garment of Asoku leaves seems to have been common.[123] From the references in the Ahanānūṟu it would appear as though this leaf garment was worn by maids before the marriage. In one poem the mother tells her daughter that she had grown into maidenhood, that her teeth were so well formed that they began to shine, that her tuft had grown as to make a knot on the head and that she had taken to a garment of leaves and that all these meant that she was not still a child.[124] This expression of the mother would lead one to wonder whether the garment of leaves was worn by grown up girls before the marriage. In another poem the Eyinar Magaḻir or the girls of the hunter class are said to have used the leaf garment.[125] The use of the leaf garment was perhaps a primitive kind of dress which was not totally given up even when cotton clothing came into vogue. This leaf garment was at times strewn with flowers.[126] The girls of the Neydal

116 Ibid. 89, 105, 207
117 Ibid. 107, 196, 311
118 Ibid. 37
119 Ibid. 394
120 Ibid. 12
121 Aham 86, 136
122 Puram 125
123 Aham 7
124 Aham 7
125 Aham 331
126 Ibid. 20

region beautified their leaf garment with the flowers of the Punnai when they were getting ready for a festival.[127] That the people were also accustomed to the use of silk clothes is evident from one of the poems.[128]

Ornaments of different kinds were also used. These ornaments were mostly of gold[129] or silver.[130] The ladies wore on the neck and breasts differing ornaments. Strings of pearls[131] and the pulippal tāli[132] adorned the breasts. There is a reference to an ornament made of sandalwood ; possibly the sandalwood was shaped like beads and joined in a string and was worn as an ornament.[133] Heavy and curved ear rings set with precious stones were worn by the ladies,[134] and were known as Kuḻai. The use of bangles and bracelets was also common. The bangles were thin and were either made of gold or silver.[135] There is also a reference to the wearing of a bangle on the upperarm, perhaps this is a reference to the wearing of bracelet.[136] In addition to such ornaments for the neck, ear, wrist and upperarm, there was an ornament which was worn round the waist. It was known as the Mēkalai and it comprised of many loops of gold coins.[137] On the feet the anklet or the Silambu or Kiṇkiṇi was worn by the ladies.[138] The use of gold anklets was known.[139]

The ladies paid particular attention to their coiffure.[140] The tresses of the lady were carefully dressed and formed into five plaits.[141] The tuft was sometimes formed into a knot at the back.[142] The girls applied a sweet smelling paste to the hair and decorated

127 Ibid. 70
128 Ibid. 236
129 Ibid. 364
130 Ibid. 142
131 Ibid. 70, 75
132 Ibid. 7
133 Ibid. 13
134 Ibid. 158, 236, 253
135 Ibid. 75, 117, 257, 142
136 Ibid. 125
137 Ibid. 269, 75, 385
138 Ibid. 17, 117
139 Ibid. 254
140 Ibid. 59
141 Ibid. 48, 117, 177
142 Ibid. 7

the tuft with flowers.[143] On the occasion of marriage the tuft was scented by applying the pollen dust of the Thaḷai or other powder.[144] The practice of having some mark on the forehead seems to have been an ancient practice and the women of the Saṅgam Age appeared with such a mark.[145] Such a mark was called the tilagam. The ladies were not content with adorning the hair and the head; they drew designs by means of making dots on the breasts and shoulders. The breasts were adorned by sticking on the petals of fresh flowers and their coloured pollen dust.[146] The palms of the feet were also decorated with the help of a red paste.[147] The ladies seem to have used a kind of brassiers.[148]

The menfolk also were fond of decoration and perfume. They wore garlands of flowers and dabbed their breasts with sandal paste and the pollen dust of the flowers.[149] The Vēṭṭuvar and the Maḻavar are said to have worn leather sandals.[150] The Uḻavar when they were engaged in agricultural activities are said to have covered their heads with a kind of cap made of the palmyra leaves, whose ends at the top looked like the two horns of the deer.[151] The wearing of sandals for the protection of the feet and caps for the head should have been common even among the other classes of people.

The dress, the ornaments and decorations of the people described above leave an impression that the people of the age desired to put on an elegant appearance and that they had a taste for finer things. Many of the ornaments and their mode of hairdo and the custom of having the Tilakam have come down to us and they only indicate the high level of material culture attained by the people of the Age.

Games and Pastimes :

The people of the land, young and old spent their leisure time in playing games and in other pastimes. The Ahanāṉūṟu describes the various games played by the girls in particular. The girls used to go out of the house for picking the Vēṅgai flowers. While

143 Ibid. 117, 389
144 Ibid. 141, 353, 378
145 Ibid. 389
146 Ibid. 177, 239, 389
147 Ibid. 389
148 Ibid. 361
149 Ibid. 48, 354
150 Ibid. 34, 101, 129
151 Ibid. 191

picking the Vēṅgai flowers they used to cry out Puli, Puli (Tiger, Tiger) in order to frighten their companions.[152] This was a kind of play among the girls but the noise they made while playing under the Vēṉgai tree attracted the attention of the menfolk and provided opportunities for the meeting of the lass and the lad. The girls enjoyed playing with balls in the neighbourhood of their houses. The play with the ball was somewhat similar to playing Volley ball.[153] Playing Kaḻangu was also common. Number of girls joined and played Kaḻangu with the help of a kind of dried beans.[154] That the beans like pieces were sometimes made of gold is known from Puṟanānūṟu.[155] Among the out-door games swinging on a suspended seat was popular among the girls. The girls used ropes made of Tāḻai fibre to suspend the seats from the Konrai trees.[156] The lover would realise from the disappearance of the swing that his lady love whom he used to meet at the place where they used to enjoy swinging had been confined to the house and wonder where her house was.[157] Another favourite pastime of the girls was to sport in the waters of the sea and in the rivers.[158] The husbands who took to the company of the Parattaiyar also enjoyed taking bath or swimming in sea or river with the help of a raft made of sugarcane or bamboo.[159] On the sea shore or on the banks of the rivers the girls also interested themselves by digging the deep nest of the red crabs.[160] Still another pastime of the girls was erecting fancy structures in sand resembling a small house on the sea shore.[161] They would at times use dolls while playing in the sand. This pastime of the young was called Vaṇdal Viḷaiyāṭṭu.[162] While at home the girls were used to spend their leisure time playing with the parrots.[163] They trained the parrots to talk with them and particularly the love stricken maiden tried to forget their unhappiness due to the separation of their lovers by spending their time with the

152 Aham 48
153 Ibid. 17, 49
154 Ibid. 17, 49, 334
155 Puram 36
156 Aham 20
157 Ibid. 38
158 Ibid. 20, 110
159 Ibid. 6, 186
160 Ibid. 20
161 Ibid. 110, 370
162 Ibid. 269
163 Ibid. 49, 369

parrots.[164] Some of the girls played with dolls to which they offered even food.[165] It is seen from a poem in the Ahanāṉūṟu that gardening was one of the pastimes of the girls. A mother exclaims when her daughter eloped with her lover "who will water the Vayali creeper, as her daughter who used to fetch in large pots[166] water that came through bamboo pipes. In another poem we come across a girl keeping watch over the fish spread for drying up and scaring away the birds that came to carry the fish.[167] It then follows that some of the girls during their leisure time helped their parents by watering the plants in the garden and by scaring away the birds from picking the dried fish. While the girls spent their leisure time in various ways, those who were aged and therefore could not move out of the house played dice Ahanāṉūṟu makes a reference to aged men whose hair had turned grey and whose heads were shaking due to age, playing dice, having drawn some lines on the floor.[168]

Funerary practices :

The dead seem to have been buried and not cremated and at the place where the body was interned vertical stone slabs were planted. These stone slabs contained epitaphs which mentioned the name of the person whose body lay beneath and his glory.[169] The stone slabs were adorned with the feathers of the pea-cock.[170] The leather shield and the Vēl or the spear were set on the slab.[171] Some of the slabs contained images carved on them.[172] These stone props were worshipped by the relatives of the dead. To the departed soul toddy extracted from paddy was offered to the accompaniment of the sound of the sweet drum. Even lambs were sacrificed during such worship.[173] The carved images were

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164 Ibid. 34
165 Ibid. 369
166 Ibid. 383
167 Ibid. 20
168 Ibid. 377
169 Ibid. 53, 67
170 Ibid. 35, 67, 131
171 Ibid. 67, 131
172 Ibid. 269
173 Ibid. 35

given a bath and smeared with turmeric paste. Garlands of Karandai flowers were made to adorn the images.[174] This practice of offering toddy and making sacrifice implies the belief of the people in life after death. They also treated the departed souls as equals to God.[175] Even now on the tenth day after death certain ceremonies are performed by the Tamils. This is known as Kalleduppu and on this day offerings are made to a stone which is taken to represent the departed soul. This practice perhaps reminds us of the ancient practice of planting Nadukal or stones.[176]

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174 Ibid. 269

175 Ibid. 35

176 Nedumtogai Selvam. Dr. M. Varadarajan. p. 168.

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Occupations :

The people of the land carried on varied occupations. We learn from the Ahanānūṟu about as many as dozen occupational groups, in addition to the Uḻavar, Idaiyar, Vēṭṭuvar, Paradavar and Maḻavar, the chief occupational groups. The Uḻavar (i.e. the agriculturists) went out of their houses before dawn to work on their fields.[1] To plough the lands they used ploughs drawn by choice buffaloes.[2] They set up tall barns in the field. The Idaiyar or Kōvalar (i.e. the cowherds) would drive the cattle to the nearby forest and return in the evening. They knew no other work except tending cattle.[3] The Idaiyar always held a stick[4] or a staff;[5] and they had their under garment rolled up; they played on the flute.[6] They sometimes raised a shrill whistle to drive the fox which came to steal the young calves. The bed of the Idaiyar was made of leather and they carried pots and nets.[7] The Idaiyar are said to have made fire by churning wood.

The people of the mountainous region, the Vēṭṭuvar and the Kuṟavar, used the hounds in hunting.[8] They used the bow and the arrow in hunting. The bow was held in the left hand.[9] Though hunting was their chief occupation, they also took to mining gold and kept watch over the Tinaippunam. A poem in the Ahanānūṟu describes how the Kānavan unexpectedly came across valuable articles. The Kānavan dug with the tusk of an elephant the earth for taking out gold. While doing so he discovered along with gold precious stones. The tusk with which he was digging broke and out fell pearls.[10] This perhaps implies that gold, precious stones and a

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1 Aham 41
2 Ibid. 37, 41
3 Ibid. 74
4 Ibid. 54
5 Ibid. 274
6 Ibid. 54
7 Ibid. 274
8 Ibid. 28, 182
9 Ibid. 52
10 Ibid. 282

It was the practice of the Kānavan to keep watch over the field during the night to prevent the elephants from eating the Tinai crop.[11] It was also a practice among these people to destroy ant holes and take the grains the ants had collected under the ground.[12] The Kānavan sometimes caught the tuskers in pits dug up by him to secure the valuable tusks.[13] Some among the Vēṭṭuvar turned highwaymen and robbed the people passing through the dry land on business.[14] They also used to steal the cows from the cattle sheds.[15] The people of the mountainous region who indulged in such highway robbery were variously called as Seṅgaṉ Ādavar[16], Koduvil Ādavar[17], and Vankaṉ Ādavar.[18] It is evident from this account that the people of this region preyed on animals and human beings.

The Paradavar, the people of the littoral region lived on the sandy beach.[19] In fishing they used nets with small holes tied to a long rope.[20] But they also used the line in fishing.[21] They went out on the sea during nights in large boats.[22] They sometimes used an axe like weapon while on fishing, probably to kill big sized fish.[23] Even pearl fishing was practiced by the Paradavar.[24] The fish caught in the sea were spread on the sandy beach near their huts and so the chēri of the Neydal region was filled with the foul smell of the dried fish.[25]

The Brāhmanās did not confine themselves to the pursuit of Vēdic studies and the performance of Vēdic rituals and sacrifices. Some among the brāhmanās, who probably did not attain proficiency in the Vēdic studies or who wantonly neglected them, became

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11 Ibid. 88, 292
12 Ibid. 377
13 Ibid. 21
14 Ibid. 3, 89, 127
15 Ibid. 7
16 Ibid. 157
17 Ibid. 167
18 Ibid. 175: Adavar means warriors; the epithets indicate the cruelty of the highwaymen.
19 Ibid. 200
20 Ibid. 30
21 Ibid. 36
22 Ibid. 60, 35
23 Ibid. 210
24 Ibid. 350
25 Ibid. 200

craftsmen. A poem in the Ahanānūṟu makes it clear that a brāhman made bangles out of shells by cutting them with a saw.[26] Such brāhmanās would have been treated just as the other craftsmen and would not have been entitled to the same amount of reverence shown to the other brāhmanās. That the Brāhmanās were employed for ambassadorial purposes becomes evident from another poem, wherein it is said that the Maṟavar, mistaking the palm leaf roll which the Brāhmanā carried in his hand to be gold attacked and killed him when he was on an errand.[27] The brāhmanā is described in this poem as one whose ribs were quite visible. The Brāhmanās looked emaciated mostly because their life was austere and punctuated by frequent fasts.

The other occupational groups were the smiths, potters and others. The black smith was called Kollan[28], and he used the bellows to keep up the fire in the furnace.[29] The goldsmith was distinguished from the blacksmith by being called Poṟkollan. The goldsmith was a skilled craftsman who wrought small images in gold.[30] The use of the precious stones like the diamond[31] would imply that the goldsmith was also a stone setter. The goldsmith made a variety of ornaments in gold such as the Pulippal Thāli,[32] the Mēkhalai,[33] worn round the waist, and the Kiṇkiṇi,[34] or the anklet. The goldsmith used silver also to make some of the ornaments like the bangles.[35]

The Potter made the mud vessels such as the Kudam and Maṇdai.[36] These mud vessels were burnt in Kilns.[37] The Kūvalar were those who dug wells with the help of the pickaxe.[38] The Kārōdan was

26 Ibid. 24
27 Ibid. 337
28 Ibid. 202
29 Ibid. 55
30 Ibid. 212
31 Ibid. 127
32 Ibid. 7
33 Ibid. 75
34 Ibid. 254
35 Ibid. 142, 317
36 Ibid. 86
37 Ibid. 308
38 Ibid. 21

the one who made the whet stone by using the lac.[39] Possibly he was also the one who sharpened the tools and instruments of the other craftsmen. In one of the poems it is said that cotton was cured by beating with a bow.[40] It can be therefore presumed that there were bed makers who supplied the wealthy people with the decorated beds that they used.[41] There were others who measured time with the help of a water clock.[42] Some were employed as watchmen to keep watch during the night and to guard the city.

The Umaṇar were the salt vendors and they moved from place to place in their carts drawn by buffaloes.[43] There were the washermen called the Kāḻiyar who washed the clothes of the people by using a kind of sand.[44] The washerman was assisted in his occupation by his wife the Pulatti, who did the washing as well as starching the clothes.[45]

The Paḻaiyar Magaḻir or the Vēṭṭuva girls would gather the flowers in bamboo pipes and go to the villages and sell the flowers.[46] The Ariyal Pendir sold toddy which they carried in pots.[47] There were women who acted as nurses or foster mothers.[48] It was the work of the ladies to make beaten rice by pounding the paddy with the help of pestles, or keeping watch over the fish dried in the open.[49]

Houses :

The houses of the people were small, or large according to their wealth. The poor people like the Kuṟavar (the people of the Kurinchi land) lived in huts.[50] These huts had a thatched roof strewn with straw.[51] We learn from a poem in the Ahanānūṟu that

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39 Ibid. 1
40 Ibid. 133
41 Ibid. 124, 167, 289
42 Ibid. 43
43 Ibid. 17
44 Ibid. 89
45 Ibid. 34, 387
46 Ibid. 231
47 Ibid. 157
48 Ibid. 105
49 Ibid. 9, 20
50 Ibid. 12
51 Ibid. 87, 172

the huts of the Paradavar (the people of the Neydal region) had low entrances,[52] and their huts were on the sandy beach and naturally the chēri in which the huts were was filled with the foul smell of the dried fish.[53]

On the other hand the rich lived in large, tall storied houses. The houses of the rich were tall and this is clear from the description that they touched the sky.[54] The houses had many stories[55] and they are said to have been cool and refreshing[56] Unlike the huts of the poor these houses were provided with high entrances.[57] In these houses lights were kept burning throughout the night.[58] Pillars seem to have supported the roofs of these storied houses and there were houses with only one pillar in the frontage.[59] Though it is not clear from the references in the Ahanāṉūṟu whether brick and mortar were used in building these houses yet it can be said from a reference to plaster,[60] that these houses should have been built with bricks and finally plastered. In such houses the rich seem to have led a luxurious life. There are a number of references in the Ahanāṉūṟu to the soft mattresses used by the rich. The beds were wide and sometimes spread with sweet smelling flowers and swans' soft feathers.[61] One of the poems of the Ahanāṉūṟu mentions a bed consisting of mattresses arranged one above the other.[62] The Tiger skin was used by some as bed cover.[63] These houses seem to have been well guarded by watchmen.[64]

In the Tamil country there were villages and towns. The villages comprised of number of chēris.[65] Some of the villages were so poor that there were only small huts with thatched roofs.[66] In the towns

52 Ibid. 210
53 Ibid. 200, 210
54 Ibid. 87
55 Ibid. 124
56 Ibid. 105
57 Ibid. 103
58 Ibid. 87
59 Ibid. 369
60 Ibid. 346
61 Ibid. 167, 289
62 Ibid. 305
63 Ibid. 58
64 Ibid. 255
65 Ibid. 220, 303
66 Ibid. 87

and cities, on top of the houses, flags were flown.[67] The houses were decorated on festive occasions such as marriage, when the outer wall of the house was painted with red sand paste and garlands were hung at the entrance.[68]

Trade:

The people of the land carried on brisk internal as well as foreign trade. The people who lived in the different regions of the land exchanged their goods. Trade was both by barter and by the use of currency. The Paradavar exchanged their fish for paddy.[69] Likewise they got exchanged the salt for paddy.[70] In two poems it is said that salt was offered in exchange for paddy.[71]

The shells got from the sea were also exchanged by the Paradavar for toddy.[72] Gold coins were in use as money.[73] There seems to have been a kind of money called Paḷingu Kāsu.[74] The term Paḷingu in Tamil would mean a whitish substance. It may be that these Paḷingu Kāsu were silver coins. In many parts of India the Kauri shells had been used as money before coins were introduced. The Paḷingu Kāsu may have been therefore some such money, but nothing definite can be said about the Paḷingu Kāsu, except that by the side of the gold coin there was another coin made of a different metal or substance. There were markets which were spoken of as Aṅgādi,[75] where the goods were sold. The term Āvaṇam was also used to denote the market place.[76] But the goods were sold even on the streets; for example the Paḷaiyar Magaḷir sold the flowers they had collected in bamboo pipes in the streets of the village.[77] One of the

67 Ibid. 196
68 Ibid. 86, 195
69 Ibid. 340
70 Ibid. 140
71 Ibid. 390, 140
72 Ibid. 296
73 Ibid. 363, 293
74 Ibid. 315
75 Ibid. 93
76 Ibid. 122
77 Ibid. 331

poems of the Ahanānūru refers to a Pāṇmagaḷ selling the Vāḷai fish in the streets.[78]

The merchants and the people used mules for transporting their goods. The goods were loaded on the back of the mules and they acted as the beasts of burden.[79] But the Umaṇar, the salt vendors seem to have used carts drawn by buffaloes[80]. The rich among the people travelled in chariots. The chariots were either drawn by mules or horses. The rich among the Paradavar used the mules for their chariots.[81] The people of the other regions used four swift steeds to draw their chariots.[82] The wheels of the chariots had number of spokes,[83] and that enabled the chariots to move fast. The chariots were manufactured according to the rules prescribed for making them.[84] The chariots were adorned with strings of pearls and the horses yoked to the chariots were also adorned with strings of beads.[85] Bells were also tied round the necks of the horses.[86] These chariots to which horses were yoked should have been used for distant voyages and as fast moving vehicles on land.[87]

On the sea the people employed the boat called the Timil and the ship called the Nāvāi or Vaṅgam or Kalam. The Paradavar used the boats for fishing.[88] There were huge ships which when they began to sail in large numbers gave the impression as though the world itself was moving.[89] The ships had flags tied to their masts.[90] These ships do not seem to have been rowed by oarsmen for in one of the poems in the Ahanānūru it is said that the huge ship was being driven by the strong wind.[91] This would mean that there were

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78 Ibid. 126
79 Ibid. 343, 89
80 Ibid. 17
81 Ibid. 350
82 Ibid. 104, 334
83 Ibid. 14
84 Ibid. 234
85 Ibid. 254
86 Ibid. 66
87 Ibid. 234
88 Ibid. 330
89 Ibid. 255
90 Ibid. 110
91 Ibid. 255

sails in the ships and that they could be used on sea voyages only when there was strong wind. Powerful lights glowing on top of tall houses served as light houses on the shore and they helped the sailor the Neekān during nights to spot out the ports. [92] That the Tamils carried on sea borne trade is evident from a reference that the husband left in a huge ship for the purpose of amassing wealth.[93]

As the Tamils went out of the country to distant lands across the sea, foreigners such as the Yavanās came to South India for purposes of trade and returned after buying the articles that they prized much. The term Yavanās was applied generally to the Greeks and the Romans by the Indians in the past, though the Tamils used it to indicate the foreigners generally. A poem in the Ahanānūṟu refers to the Yavanās who came in their ship to the Chēra port Musiri at the confluence of the Sulli river with the sea, and returned after buying pepper in exchange for gold. [94] That there was an inflow of gold into the Tamil country is quite evident from this reference. This reference in the Ahanānūṟu has been confirmed by the discovery of Roman gold and silver coins in the Tamil country, especially in the Coimbatore and Madurai districts from where large number of coins was unearthed.

In this connection it is intersting to note that so far not even a single coin of the Tamils of the Saṅgam Age has been brought to light, though there are references to the use of gold coins which resembled the gooseberry in shape. [95] Further Archaeological excavations may bring to light such coins of the Tamils also in the future. The absence of such gold coins of the Tamils at present, might be perhaps; due to the fancy of the Tamils for ornaments of gold. Sir Mortimer Wheeler in his "Rome beyond the Imperial frontiers", points out that the Tamils used the Roman gold coins as bullion. Some of the gold coins, according to him, have been pierced and they seem to

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92 Ibid. 255
93 Ibid. 255
94 Ibid. 149
95 Aham 363

have been worn as an ornament. The earliest coins of India do not have any inscription or the figure of the ruler and contain only punch marks. Hence it can be said that there were such coins also in the Tamil country and because they seem to have been converted into ornaments, we are not in a position to distinguish them as coins. Whatever may be said, the fact remains, that we have at present no coin used by the Tamils of the Saṅgam Age.

The three Tamil kingdoms were noted for particular natural products. The Pāṇdya country was famous for pearls. The port of Korkai in the Pāṇdya country was a pearl fishing centre.[96] The pearls of the Pāṇdya country seem to have been very strong. In a poem in the Ahanānūṟu it is said that these pearls hurt the hooves of the horses and slowed down their speed when the chariots were driven on the beach.[97] Pearls, as we know, were also in great demand in the West, especially among the Romans. It is not unlikely that the pearls of the Pāṇdya country also found their way into the Roman empire. The Chōḻa country was proverbial for the abundance of paddy. This is corroborated by the evidence of the Ahanānūṟu in which it is said that there were number of cities in the chōḻa country, where there was plenty of white paddy.[98] The chēra country was similarly famous for pepper[99] which was in great demand in the marts of the West.

In the Ahanānūṟu we do not come across with big industries. Though there were many craftsmen production was not on a large scale. The salt manufacture was, perhaps, the one industry which was on a large scale, as the salt was required for use throughout the country. This account of the industries in the Tamil country in the Saṅgam Age, as reflected in the Ahanānūṟu, will show that though there were some essential industries flourishing here and there the population by and large, was a peasant population and that agriculture was the major preoccupation of the people.

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96 Aham 27, 137, 201
97 Aham 130
98 Aham 201
99 Aham 149

CHAPTER V

RELIGION

Deities and Worship :

The Ahanānūṟu speaks of a few male and female deities and mentions some religious practices of the Tamils of the Saṅgam Age. A close study of the anthology unmistakably points to the blend of the Āryan and Non-Āryan elements in the religious life of the people. The Tamils seem to have been quite conversant with the stories of the Epic—The Rāmāyaṇa, and the Purāṇas. All this leads one to conclude that the south accepted certain Aryan deities and practices at the same time retaining its own deities and forms of worship.

Lord Siva is mentioned, though not by that name, in two places in the Ahanānūṟu. In the invocatory verse he is referred to as the Andaṇan or Brahman, under whose protecting feet the world flourishes. In another place he is mentioned as the three-eyed Lord whose good fame was known throughout the world and as the one who is praised by four ancient Vēdas.[1] In the same stanza it is stated that Ālamuṟṟam (or the courtyard with the Banyan tree) was His residence. The reference to Siva as a Brahman and the Vēdas praising Him, indicate that Siva was not an indigenous God of the Tamils and that the worship of Siva should have become common only after the penetration of the Aryans into the Tamil country.

Lord Vishṇu, is mentioned indirectly, though not by name in the Ahanānūṟu. The rainbow is compared to the garland worn by the Lord, whose chest was capable of destroying the enemies and who wielded the discus which emitted shinning rays.[2] In the stanza Vishṇu is referred to as Selvan. In another place both Siva and Vishṇu are alluded to in a picturesque manner by the poet who describes the

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[1] Aham 181

[2] Aham 175

pleasing sight at sun set. The scarlet sky at sunset touching the blue sea looked as though the two Great Gods whose might infused terror jointly appeared on the scene.[3] Siva is described in the invocatory verse as one whose complexion was similar to the scarlet sky. It is therefore clear that the two Gods referred to in the above stanza are unmistakably Siva and Vishṇu. It is interesting to note that these two deities are referred to as the two great Gods. It is therefore evident that Lord Siva and Lord Vishṇu came to occupy a predominent position among the Gods of the Tamils even then. The worship of Vishṇu also should have been the result of Āryan influence on the Tamils.

Next in the esteem of the Tamils was God Murugā and He is mentioned in a number of places in the Ahanānūṟu. Murugā appears to have been a God of War. In one of the stanzas Neduvēḷ Āvi is compared to Murugā in war and this implies that for the Tamils Murugā was the God of War.[4] Murugā is referred to as Neduvēḷ in another stanza and is stated to have destroyed those who did not submit.[5] In another place it is stated that the mountain of Nediyōn where festivals were conducted always, and on which the victorious flag containing the figure of the peacock has been raised, was to the west of Kūdal, the capital of the Pāṇdyas.[6] The commentator has identified this moutain with Thirupparaṅkunram.[7] Another holy place of Murugā is Thiruchchīralaivāi, also mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu, as Alaivāi.[8]

Among the Goddesses, Umaiyōḷ is stated to have formed part of Siva[9]. Kollippāvai was carved on the Kolli mountain[10]. The Kollippāvai seems to have been worshipped at other places also. One of the stanzas states that the Pāvai in the Manram or a common place

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3 Aham 360
4 Aham 1
5 Aham 22
6 Aham 149
7 N. M. Venkatasamy Nattar: Ahananuru, Part II. p. 61
8 Aham 226
9 Aham Invocatory stanza.
10 Aham 209, 62

was washed of its colour by the rain and became shrunk due to the heat of the Sun.[11] This reference perhaps implies that the worship of Kollippāvai was popular among the Tamils and that they had the figure of the Kollippāvai carved in wood and painted. The chaste ladies are compared to the Goddess who dwelt in the sky. The commentator identifies this Goddess with Aruntati, the Star of Chastity.[12] The sea was considered as a Goddess.[13] The Sun was also worshiped as a God and it is stated that his chariot moves on only one wheel.[14] The Tamils believed that the Dēvas, the celestial ones adorned themselves with flowers which never faded.[15]

The Tamils believed that the Gods resided in trees[16] and mountains.[17] They also thought that the Gods were capable of taking the form they desired.[18] To the Gods the Tamils made sacrifices. It is stated in one of the stanzas that a fat cow was sacrificed to the God which resided in the neem tree and that the blood of the animal was spilt around the place of worship. After the sacrifice, the flesh of the sacrificed cow was cooked and eaten.[19] The influence of the Āryans seems to have introduced the Vēdic sacrifices among the Tamils Paṇṇan one of the chieftains is said to have performed a sacrifice.[20] In another connection the fire place, or altar where the sacrifices were offered is mentioned.[21] In one of the stanzas it is stated that the fermented toddy, which in its effect was like the poison of the snake, was offered to the mountain in which the God resided.[22] This reference would imply that the objects of nature, such as the tree, and the mountain, in which the Gods were believed to reside were also worshipped by the Tamils.

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11 Aham 157
12 N. M. Venkatasamy Nattar: Ahananuru. Stanzas: 16, 73
13 Aham 370
14 Aham 360
15 Aham 361
16 Aham 270. 309
17 Aham 22, 158, 338
18 Aham 158
19 Aham 309
20 Aham 13
21 Aham 361
22 Aham 348

The Tamils worshipped the Gods and Goddesses by folding their hands and joining their palms together.[23] The deities seem to have been worshipped at sunset.[24] In one stanza it is stated that the maids lit the lamps at sun set.[25] Possibly the deities were worshipped at sun set after the lamps were lighted. The Tamils believed that invoking deities at the beginning of a ceremony would enable them to finish it well and also secure for them the blessing of the Gods. The marriage ceremony for example was started after invoking a God.[26] From a stanza in the Ahanānūru it is evident that the people used small images of deities for worship in their own houses. It is stated that the images of Pāvai were in the niches of the halls and that they were adorned with strings of pearls[27] To these deities also the people seem to have offered sacrifices.

Murugā was worshipped by the Vēlan whose frenzied dance was called Veri Ādal. For the Veriādal, a special structure was put up.[28] Similarly a special altar was erected.[29] At the altar either the Vēl or the spear of Murugā or his flag was planted, and adorned with garlands.[30] The Vēlan, or the one who invoked Murugā would also adorn himself with a garland of Palmyrah leaves and Kadambu flowers.[31] During worship he sang and danced in praise of Murugā to the accompaniment of instrumental music.[32] On this occasion sacrifices were offered and it is stated in one of the stanzas that the goat was sacrificed.[33] The tinai was mixed with the blood of the sacrificed animal and was scattered all round the place.[34] Veriādal seems to have taken place at mid-night and at times it lasted throughout the night.[35] The practice of Vēlan Veriādal appears to have been a primitive practice which was continued even after the Aryan

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23 Aham 125, 240
24 Aham 201
25 Aham 47
26 Aham 136
27 Aham 369
28 Aham 98
29 Aham 22
30 Aham 22, 382
31 Aham 98
32 Aham 98, 138
33 Aham 22, 242
34 Aham 22
35 Aham 22, 138

religious ideas affected the Tamils. The worship of Murugā also seems to have been a primitive practice and we may not be far from the truth if we say, that Murugā was the God of the Tamils, who lost his predominant position after the introduction of the worship of Sivā and Vishṇu by the Āryans of the north. But, that this primitive practice did not die out and still persists among the Tamils is evident from the practice of carrying the image of Murugā or the symbol of the deity, the Vēl in wooden structures called the Kāvadis.

The poets whose compositions are included in the Ahanānūṟu refer to stories connected with Krishṇa, Rāma, Balarāma and the Moon. The mention of such stories implies that the epics and the puranās were known to the Tamils of the age. The fact that there are only stray references to such stories goes to prove that a majority of the people remained for a long time unaffected by the Aryan influence. Māl or Krishna is stated to have bent a branch of a tree by pressing it with his foot to enable the shepherdesses who bathed in the Tholunai (The Yamunā) river to cover themselves with the leaves of the tree.[36] The Jivakachintāmaṇi states that Kaṇṇan stole the clothes and in order to escape from his brother Balarāma bent the Kuruntha tree into the Tholunai river.[37] The Chinthāmaṇi makes it clear that the tree which was bent was Kuruntha tree and that Krishṇa stole the dress of the Gōpikas. That the Tamils used the story and adapted it to suit the conditions of the Tamils is clear from the reference that Mal bent the tree to enable the shepherdesses to dress themselves with the leaves of the tree.

In another stanza Rāma is stated to have quietened the birds while he was engaged in the study of the scriptures under the shade of a big banyan tree at the extreme end of the Pāṇdya country, where the sea made roaring noise.[38] Though there is nothing parallel to this story in the Rāmāyaṇa, yet this story implies the belief of the Tamils in Rama's journey to the extreme south of India.

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36 Aham 59

37 Chinthamani : 209

38 Aham 70

Still another stanza mentions that the Nediyōn wielded the battle axe and having destroyed many royal dynasties, performed vedic sacrifices at Sellūr, where the fire on the altar was kept burning always.[39] The Nediyōn in the text has been identified with Parasurāmā, who wielded the Parasu or battle axe. At two places the story of the moon being devoured by the snake is mentioned.[40] These stories welcome across in Ahanānūṟu reveal the knowledge of the Purāṇas on the part of the Tamils.

Festivals :

The Tamils seem to have celebrated a number of festivals and among them two at least are mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu. One of them is the Kārthigai festival. It is stated that on the day of the star Kārthigai which also coincided with the full moon day, rows of lamps were lighted all along the streets in the town.[41] It is well known that the Tamil festival of Kārthigai deepam falls on Kirthigā and full moon day in the Tamil month of Kārthigai. This festival of light is therefore one of the very ancient festivals of the Tamils. It is evident, from another stanza in the Ahanānūṟu, that the ladies lighted lengthy rows of lamps on this occasion.[42] That this festival was one of the important festivals becomes clear from a reference to it as Peruviḻā.[43] The other festival which is mentioned in the Ahanānūṟu is the festival which comes off in the Tamil month of Panguni.[44] The commentary on Iraiyanār Ahapporuḷ states that the Panguni uttiram was a big festival.[45] Therefore, the festival that is referred to in the Ahanānūṟu could be taken to be the Panguni uttiram. It would appear from the Ahanānūṟu, that the ladies played a prominent part in these festivals and that even those menfolk who had left their homes for the sake of earning a fortune would return home without-fail and join their family in the celebration of the festival.[46]

The Tamils were aware of the impermanence of wealth which they are stated to have thought, passed from one to another.[47] In one of the

39 Aham 220
40 Aham 114, 313
41 Aham 141
42 Aham 11
43 Aham 185
44 Aham 137
45 Iraiyanar Ahapporul : Commentary : Sutra 16
46 Aham 11, 141
47 Aham 27, 79, 271

stanzas it is specifically stated that people sought wealth only for the sake of giving charity to others.[48] It is clear from this reference that people laid much emphasis on Aṟam or charity. This desire was possibly based on the idea that doing good to others would enable one to lead a blissful life in the other world. That this thought was very well rooted in the minds of the people becomes evident from a reference in the Ahanānūṟu, which states that it was thought to be an ancient saying that, if one did good in this birth, no evil will happen to him in his next birth.[49] It follows from this, that the people believed in life after death and also had faith in the doctrine of Karmā, according to which the next birth was conditioned by one's action in this birth. It is not clear whether the belief in the doctrine of Karmā was the result of the influence of the Āryans or whether it was already a deeply rooted belief, among the Tamils. The Tamils thought that begetting lovable children would not only make them live in this world with fame, but also assure them of happiness in the next world.[50] This belief also implies that the Tamils too thought that after death one entered another world. The fact that only those who bestowed charity and begot lovable children would attain a blissful abode indicates that people also had belief in the world full of sorrow, or what we may call hell. This thought should have laid emphasis on doing Aṟam, or giving charity and on living a righteous life. The philosophy of the Tamils was therefore simple and it emphasised a life of goodness and virtue.

Superstitions :

The Tamils like any other people had their superstitions, and they believed in omens. In a number of places in the Ahanānūṟu we come across references to the people listening to the click click sound of the lizard and praying that its omen may do good to them.[51] In one place it is stated that even rulers who rode on the back of elephants would not disregard the omen of the lizard and would halt for a while and then proceed further on their journey.[52] This statement of the poet implies that people of all classes, high and low, had a

[48] Aham 389
[49] Aham 101
[50] Aham 66
[51] Aham 9, 289, 351
[52] Aham 387

very strong belief in omens. One of the stanzas to the Ahanānūr states that the pig would wait for the good omen of the lizard and then proceed to eat the corn in the field, thinking that it would then meet with no danger.[53] The hooting of the owl was also taken as a omen for the Tamils thought, that the owl was capable of foreboding the furure.[54] The Umaṉar or the salt vendors would start from the salt pans only after waiting for the omen of the birds.[55] It is clear from such references that the Tamils undertook any work of importance only after they met with good omen. The omen of the lizard is observed by the Tamils even today.

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53 Aham 88

54 Aham 19

56 Aham 207

CHAPTER VI

CULTURE

Literature :

The Age of the Saṅgam witnessed a rich crop of literature. The voluminous literature of the period by itself, speaks of the high rate of literacy and the literary attainments of the people. That the people valued education much becomes evident from the Puṟanāṉūṟu.[1] The establishment and the existence of an academy of poets, called differently at different times as Avai or Saṅgam, further proves that there were many poets who composed works, which were worthy of presentation before such an Academy. The poets could not have composed works in such large number, if there was no encouragement and patronage. Almost all the personages, whom we come across in the Ahanāṉūṟu appear as patrons of learning. The kings and the chieftains were themselves invariably learned men, and were capable of composing poetry. The fact that the rulers patronised the poets implies that they loved learning and were also capable of apprecia-ting the compositions of the poets.

In the Ahanāṉūṟu nine rulers appear as authors of the stanzas included in the anthology.

1. Marudam Pādiya Iḷamkaduṅgō.[2] The name suggests that he was skilled in composing poetry relating to the Marutattiṇai. He has to his credit two stanzas in the Ahanāṉūṟu.

2. Kānappēreyil Tanta (Kadanta) Uggirapperu Vaḻudi.[3] Even this Pāṇdya seems to have been skilled in Marutattiṇai.

3. Ollaiyūr Tanta Poodappāṇdiyan.[4]

4. Aṟivudai Nambi.[5]

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[1] Puram 183
[2] Aham 96, 176
[3] Aham 26
[4] Aham 25
[5] Aham 28

5. Pālai Pādiya Perunkadungō.[6] As the name itself suggests he was skilled in composing the verses pertaining to the Pālai tiṇai. He has to his credit twelve stanzas in the Ahanānūṟu. In one of the stanzas he points out that satisfying the desire of the needy was Aṟam, or Dharma. In the same stanza he deprecates idleness by saying that one should not go to others and beg.[7]

6. Kōṭṭambalattu Tuñjiya Chēramān.[8]

7. Chēramān Iḷankuṭṭuvan.[9]

8. Mudangikkidanta Nedumcēralātan.[10]

9. Pāṇdyan Enādi Nedumkaṇṇanār.[11] He was perhaps, the general of the Pāṇdya.

It will be evident from the above list that a number of Pāṇdya rulers and members of the Chēra dynasty were men of learning. Even among the Chōḷas there should have been such poets. Kiḷḷivaḷavan appears as an author of a stanza in the Puṟanānūṟu,[12] and this proves that even among the Chōḷas there should have been poets.

The poets who figure as the authors of the stanzas in the Ahanānūṟu were drawn from the length and breadth of the Tamil country. That they were the natives of one or the other of the three Tamil Kingdoms will be clear from the following list.

1. *Toṇdi* Amūr Sāttanār.[13]

2. *Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinattu* Seṅgaṇṇanār.[14]

3. *Kāvirippūmpaṭṭinattu* Kārikkaṇṇanar.[15]

4. *Madurai*kkaṇakkāyanar.[16]

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[6] Aham 5, 99, 111; He was so called because he contributed the Palai division of Kalitogai.
[7] Aham 155
[8] Aham 168
[9] Aham 153 He; was perhaps the son of Senguttuvan.
[10] Aham 30
[11] Aham 373
[12] Puram 173
[13] Aham 169
[14] Aham 103
[15] Aham 107
[16] Aham 27

5. *Madurai*ppērālavāyar.[17]

6. *Uṟaiyūr* Mudukūttanār.[18]

7. *Uṟaiyūr* Maruttuvan Dāmōdaranār.[19]

One of the poets by name *Ē*ḻattu Bhūdan Dēvanār seems to have been a native of Ceylon.[20] He should have come to Madurai, the seat of the Tamil Saṅgam for presenting his composition. The fame of and the standard set up by the Academy was so high that even foreigners considered it an honour to present their compositions before the Academy and secure its approval.

A study of the list of the poets who composed the stanzas of the Ahanānūṟu would reveal the interesting information that the authors of a good number of stanzas were merchants, craftsmen, and professional men.

1. Taṅgār Poṟkkollanār (meaning the goldsmith of the place called Taṅgāl.)[21]
2. Seyalūr Iḷampon Sāttan Koṟṟanār (Sattan Koṟṟanār of Seyalūr, who dealt in gold)[22]
3. Madurai Ponsey Kollan Veṇṇāganār (a goldsmith)[23]
4. Madurai Aṟuvai Vāṇigan Iḷavēṭṭanār (a merchant dealing in cloth)[24]
5. Madurai Pāṇda Vāṇigan Iḷandēvanār (a merchant dealing in provisions)[25]
6. Madurai Kaṇakkāyanār (school teacher)[26]
7. Uṟaiyūr Maruttuvan Dāmōdaranār (a doctor)[27]

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[17] Aham 87
[18] Aham 329
[19] Aham 133
[20] Aham 82
[21] Aham 108
[22] Aham 177: He seems to have been a merchant dealing in gold; This is seen from the variation in the texts.
[23] Aham 363
[24] Aham 56
[25] Aham 58
[26] Aham 28
[27] Aham 133

The above list makes it clear that the people, though engaged in different occupations had a fairly good education and at least some of them were highly educated as to be authors of compositions which are in no way inferior to those of the other poets and bards.

The above account has shown that the poets were drawn from different parts of the Tamil country and from different walks of life. It will be clear now that they were drawn from both the sexes also. We come across a number of poetesses in the Ahanāṉūṟu and they are as follows :

1. Auvaiyār : (She refers to the Kārthikai festival. It was noted above that ladies played a prominent part in the festivals and Auvaiyār being a lady herself mentions the Kārthigai festival)[28]

2. Veṟipādiya Kāmnakkaṇṇiyār (She describes the Vēlan Veṟi Ādal in her composition. Perhaps the epithet Veṟi-Pādiya came to be attached to her name because of this.)[29]

3. Pōndaippasalaiyār (She describes in her composition how the girls played on the beach, building fancy structures in the sand)[30]

4. Kumuḻi naḻalar Nappasalaiyār. (She gives the interesting information that the male tortoise would keep watch over the eggs laid by its mate, till they are hatched.)[31]

5. Kaḻār Kīran Eyiṟṟiyār.[32]

6. Nakkaṇṇaiyār (She mentions that the tiger when it kills the animals, would make them fall on its right side. She also mentions the practice of keeping watch over the tanks at night.)[33]

7. Ōkkūr Māsāttiyār.[34]

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28 Aham 11
29 Aham 22
30 Aham 110
31 Aham 160
32 Aham 163
33 Aham 252
34 Aham 324

8. Añjiattai Magaḷ Nāgaiyār. (She describes a scene in the forest in a picturesque way. The male monkey had in its hand a big Jack fruit. In front of it a pea-cock was standing having spread out its plumes. This sight resembled, the dance performance of the bards in which the drummer stood behind the dancing Viṟali.)[35]

9. Veḷḷi Vēdiyār. (She mentions that when the male of the tiger got wounded in a fight against a tusker and lay in the cave, its mate was keeping watch at the cave and this implies the element of love even among animals.)[36]

Music and Dance:

Music and Dance played a prominent part in the life of the people. The people found time for singing tunes, playing on the yāḻ or lute and the flute, and also dancing in public places. In the Ahanānūṟu we come across a number of musical instruments. The yāḻ, or the lute is described as one made with a black stem.[37] The yāḻ was a stringed musical instrument.[38] The yāḻ was mostly used by the Pāṇar, the wandering bards.[39] The Kōvalar or the cowherds played on the flute, the wind instrument.[40] The flute was made of the fully ripe Konṟai fruit.[41] The Kōvalar played on the flute and the melodious music drew towards them the cows and calves which had strayed into the dry lands.[42] In addition to playing on these, string and wind instruments, the Tamils sounded a variety of percussion instruments such as the Muḻavu,[43] Toṇdagappaṟai,[44] and Kiṇai.[45]

The Tamils were remarkably skilled in playing certain tunes on these instruments. The Ahanānūṟu mentions some of the tunes which were popular among the Tamils. The Sevvaḻippaṇ or tune was played on the yāḻ.[46] In the Ahanānūṟu it is mentioned that when the

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35 Aham 352
36 Aham 362
37 Aham 331
38 Aham 109
39 Aham 331
40 Aham 74
41 Aham 54
42 Aham 354, 399
43 Aham 336
44 Aham 118
45 Aham 301
46 Aham 14

Kodichchi, or the wife of the hunter sang the Kuruñchippaṉ the elephant which had entered the field and had plucked the sheaves of corn, neither ate the corn, nor left the place but fell fast asleep.[47] This stanza implies that if the Kodichchi or the huntress could sing melodiously the ladies of the other classes also would have been capable of singing sweetly and possibly took training in singing. In another verse the Pāṇan is said to have played the Pālaippaṉ on the yāḻ.[48]

Along with music, dance also played a prominent part in the life of the Tamils. We find references to a variety of dances of the Tamils of the age, such as Kuravai, Thuṇaṅgai, Thōḷi, and Amalai. The Kuravai kūttu, or dance was popular among the Tamils. Both men and women performed the Kuravai dance. The girls, if they got bored with swinging on the swing, would begin to dance the Kuravai kūttu, on the sandy beach.[49] In the marriage season, when the Vēṅgai tree blossomed, the Kuravar danced in the open in front of their houses with their womenfolk,[50] who were skilled in dancing the Kuravai kūttu. The married women when they go to the tank for fetching water, having consumed the distilled toddy, would place their pots aside and dance the Kuravai kuttu under the shade of the Kāñchi tree singing about their husbands' association with the courtesans.[51] The girls used to raise their hands and shoulders and dance under the shade of the tree. This was known as Thōḷi dance.[52] During festivals the Thuṇaṅgai Kūttu was performed to the accompaniment of the sound of the drum. One of the poems in the Ahanāṉūṟu implies that the menfolk danced the Thuṇaṅgai kūttu with the courtesans.[53] The Amalai was the victorious war dance, performed with shinning swords after securing victory on the battle field.[54]

The Kūttar, or the dancers travelled from place to place and danced to the accompaniment of the sound of the small and big trumpets, the sweet drum and certain other small musical instruments

47 Aham 102
48 Aham 355
49 Aham 20
50 Aham 232
51 Aham 336
52 Aham 344
53 Aham 336
54 Aham 142

which produced the clinking sound.[55] The dance of the Virali or the dancing girl has been compared to the movement of the pea-cock with spread out plumes in one of the stanzas of the Ahanānūru.[56] Possibly the Virali appeared on the scene in a colourful dress. At times the menfolk appeared in the guise of women while dancing.[57] When dancing the dancers had small bells tied to their waist in order to produce the ringing sound.[58] Āttan Atti is said to have danced, having tied bells around the waist, to the sweet sound of the golden cymbals.[59] In one of the poems the Vēlan's dance is compared to the dance of a mechanical Pāvai which was made to dance by the expert.[60] This reference would imply that puppet shows were known to the Tamils.

It is clear from the above account, that the Tamils enjoyed music and dance and there were occasions on which music and dance performances were held. The mention of Kūttar and Virali implies that there were professional dancers who wandered throughout the country giving music and dance performances, to earn their livelihood. The use of the variety of musical instruments also implies the place given to instrumental music in those days. On the whole the appreciation of the music and dance points out the aesthetic sense of the people and their finer taste.

Painting and Sculpture :

Some of the stanzas of the Ahanānūru would make it clear that the Tamils took to painting of pictures and images. In one place it is said that the Ladylove stood before the hero motionless like the image in the picture and this implies that there were painted pictures.[61] In another stanza it is said that a painting of the Pāvai in the manram was losing its colour due to exposure to the rain, and was also shrinking due to the heat of the sun.[62] The Kolli mountain is said to have been beautified by the Kollippāvai carved on its side.[63] This would imply that there were sculptured images of the deities.

55 Aham 301
56 Aham 82
57 Aham 206
58 Aham 368
59 Aham 376
60 Aham 98
61 Aham 5
62 Aham 157
63 Aham 62

Conclusion :

The Ahanānūṟu, the longest and the most comprehensive of the Aham group of works included in the Eṭṭutogai, gives us many authentic insight into the political conditions, social life and culture of the Tamils. Judging from the standards of the age and from the available material, the culture of the Tamils was a simple, unsophisticated one, at the sametime combining in itself the material comforts of a sophisticated life. The compositions in the Ahanānūṟu reveal the intermixture of non-Āryan or Dravidian, and the Āryan cultures. But the Dravidian element predominates the life of the Tamils, though there are unmistakable traces of the penetration of Āryan ideals and practices, especially in the field of religion. There has been a tendency, to form general conclusions from the stray and indirect references and on the other hand to condemn the evidence of the Saṅgam literature as completely useless for purposes of writing the history of the Tamils. Both these trends are obviously wrong. It should be the duty of the historian to discriminate the historical from the imaginary accounts, in an objective manner, without allowing the patriotic fervour to give colour to the facts. It must be admitted that even a complete study of all the Saṅgam works would not provide a thorough picture of the life of the Tamils. However, the picture presented by the Ahanānūṟu can be taken to give a general picture of the Tamils. The Tamil country was self sufficient in so far as the necessaries of life were concerned. The kings and the chieftains lived a life of almost continuous warfare among themselves and against common foes. Nevertheless their government was based on Aṟam, or Dharma. It is significant to note that the rulers were almost all of them learned men and loved learning in others and encouraged the poets and the bards by their liberal patronage. The Tamils were a gay people who enjoyed sumptuous feeding and merry making on festive occasions. They were eager to entertain the guests and their hospitality was remarkable. Internal trade was brisk. The exports to the west brought into the country considerable amount of gold and silver. The religion of the Tamils, though in many respects primitive, was polytheistic and involved bloody sacrifices. The worship of the trees and probably also the reptiles and animals associated with the different deities appears to have been common. The greatest achievement of the Tamils was, no doubt, in the field of literature and fine arts. The high standard of the Saṅgam literature has led to the characterization of the Age as the Golden Age of Tamil literature.

APPENDIX I

INVOCATION

The world is under the protecting feet of the Brahmaṇa (Lord Siva,) who in complexion is as red as the scarlet sky at sun set, and whose white and sharp curved teeth resemble the crescent, and whose matted locks adorned with the crescent are as bright as the tongues of fire. He is beyond the comprehension of the youthful Dēvas and holymen and is in time very old. He is clad in the striped skin of the tiger and His Voice is as sweet as the sound of the yāḻ and His throat is like a shinning sapphire. He wears on the head and on the chest garlands of Konṟai, the winter blossom, along with the faultless sacred thread. He has an unwinking eye in the forehead and an axe in one hand and a trident in the other. He knows no defeat in war and has for His mount the bull. Goddess Umā forms part of His body. (The world will be therefore eversafe.)

PĀLAI

Aham : *1*

The Ladylove tells her maid.

The Podini Mountain belongs to "Āvi the vēḷir chieftain, who wears a garland of flowers, which invited the bees, and a bright anklet. He drove in battle the Maḷavar who possessed fearful horses. In valour he is equal to Murugā and he owns elephants with well shaped tusks.

My lover exclaimed on the Podini Mountain, "like the lac and stone mixed by the whetter to make the polishing stone, we shall never be separated". But he has since left me alone here, in quest of wealth with which he could adorn me with gold ornaments. He has to cross a forest in which the rays of the Sun are as hot as the flames of fire. The land there has dried up and there are clefts in the soil. The trees are devoid of leaves and so they give no shade (to the travellers). As the heat of the sun is so severe as to fry the corn, the rocks are also hot and the ponds in the hills have become dry. None dares to pass through the forest because of the extreme heat. The

bandits (who live in the forest and who used to rob the travellers) have become poor as no one goes through the forest. The Murunga tree in the forest tossed by the strong wind that blows there has shed its white flowers, which make the landscape look like the beach full of surf produced by the waves of the sea. My husband's separation from me has caused my bamboo like shoulders to lose their shape.

KURINJI

Aham : 2

The maid informs the hero in this poem that the lady love is in a well guarded house and points to the necessity of an early proposal.

Oh! Lord of the hill tract! In your place the male monkey having eaten the ripe plantain fruits from the plantain having well grown leaves, and a large bunch of fruits, and the Jack fruit, which prevents one from consuming anything else from the mountain side, and having drunk the honey from a pond in the hill mistaking it for water, sleeps on a bed of sweet smelling flowers instead of climbing up the nearby sandalwood tree on which the pepper (creeper) has spread. Likewise all the other animals of your place derive pleasure without effort. If that be so do you think the pleasure you seek will be difficult to attain ?

My Lady, who is extremely beautiful and whose shoulders are like well grown bamboos, is unable to control herself having set her heart on you. Her father keeps the house well guarded and so you can visit her during night time, when watchmen are not vigilant. (But even this will be a dangerous task.)

The Vēṅgai tree surrounded by the bush is full of clusters of flowers. The new moon has also appeared. (This is time for marriage and so make arrangements for marrying her).

PĀLAI

Aham : 3

The hero tells his heart (a soliloquy).

Oh ! My heart ! In a safe place in one of the spread out and beautiful branch of the ōmai tree, whose barks resemble the scales of the crocodile in deep back waters, the (female) eagle keeps watch

over its young. Its mate goes to the mountain which seems to touch the sky, and like the robber, brings back the foul smelling flesh of the bison, which had been beaten down on the right side by a tiger, which had left the dead body of the bison having drunk its blood. The Marā trees in that place have few leaves in them (due to the heat of the sun). When I once left my house to get for my wife choice ornaments you reminded me of my wife at that place, and made me return without the ornaments. Now once again you are goading me to go in quest of wealth. But when my ladylove's pleasing ruddy lips, which resemble the flower of the Murukku, her sweet words, and her enchanting eyes, which seem to vie with the curved ear rings adorning her ears, make me unhappy while I am on my journey, you will fail to encourage me and will make me unhappy.

MULLAI

Aham : *4*

The Maid tells the Ladylove:

With the coming of the winter season the clouds thundered and there was copious rainfall, and that removed the drought in the forest. The jasmine blossomed. The buds in the Therrā and Konrai trees are slowly opening their petals. In the pits, where there were small stones the harts having horns, which look like twisted iron rods, leap here and there. The forest gave a pleasant sight.

The hero, who is the Lord of the hill tract, is coming in a chariot drawn by horses, whose heads have been covered by a curved head dress and whose mane have been clipped. The hero has tied the tongues of the bells adorning the chariot, so that they may not ring and disturb the bees, (whose humming sound is like that of the yāl and) which are with their mates (in the flowers). He has been reminded of you by the sweet smell of the closely bloomed Kānthal flower seen on the high mountain to the east of Urandai, where festivals are frequently conducted and so filled with noise.

PĀLAI

Aham : *5*

The hero tells his heart (a soliloquy)

Oh! My heart! The forest (which you have to cross while going in quest of wealth) has dried up omai trees. The transparent myrobalan

lie on the high rocks as to look like the pawns gathered by the children. The Sun's heat is severe there. The passages in the forest are full of sharp edged stones which appear as though they have been so shaped and they hurt the feet of the passersby. The forest therefore is devoid of any use.

The Ladylove, even before I have come to a decision, whether to leave her in quest of wealth or not, having read my mind had begun to show her anxiety by her behaviour. When I called her she pretended as if she did not hear me calling her. She exhibited a feeling of loneliness in her. She came to me taking steps so slowly as to leave the impressions of her ruddy feet on the floor, and smiled at me with effort as to exhibit her sharp teeth. With tears hiding the apple of her eye, and smelling the wreath of Sengaluneer on the head of her son in her arms, and heaving a heavy sigh as to make the flowers fade and thereby lose their beauty. She has stood in front of me like a statue, as if to remind me of the old saying, that those who depart from their Ladylove would be committing an unrighteous act. I have decided not to depart from her. My Lady, who wears bright bangles, and who suffers so much at the very thought of my departure cannot survive, if I depart from her.

MARUDAM

Aham: 6

The Ladylove tells her husband on his return from the house of the courtesan.

An anklet in which there are small stones, adorns the feet of Aiyai. A garland of Ambal flowers is seen on her breast. Bangles cut with the saw make her forearms beautiful. Her broad shoulders also have been adorned with ornaments. Her father Tittan, who is the Lord of Urandai, which is full of heaps of paddy, is unstinting like the rain in giving presents (to the bards.)

At Urandai, in the freshet of the Kāviri in which the oars cannot be held fast, You swam with the courtesan, who wears bright ear rings, and whom you love, with the help of a raft made of white sugar cane like the male elephant, which plunges cheerfully into the pond

in the land of the Puliyar, so as to make the garland of flowers on your breast lose its beauty.

Today having come to me, you extol the beauty of my breasts, which are covered by beauty spots, and address me as the chaste mother of your son, and thereby sneer at my advanced age. But what you say is fitting and true.

At Kaḻār which belongs to Matti, the beaver having tossed the hollow Vallai creeper in the fields, which also have lotus flowers that are red like flames, will sleep at the root of the cane plant, having consumed the Vāḷai fish. My youthfulness which is comparable to the prosperity of Kaḻār has passed away. Your words of false praise cannot deceive me. (So go back to the courtesan).

PĀLAI

Aham: 7

The foster mother is supposed to enquire from a young deer, having the company of Harts, which make pleasing calls.

Your breasts are in form. Your teeth are well grown and bright; the tresses are long as to make a knot; you have begun to wear clothes made of cool leaves. Therefore, you should not go out with your playmates, who wander here and there. This ancient place is infested by spirits, which do harm. Therefore, you cannot leave the house, and you should not go even to the doorway (entrance); you are not a child still; you have crossed that stage, and you are now a maiden.

So I told the girl, who wears round her waist a garment made of well grown but tender leaves of the Asōka tree and a Tāli made of tiger's teeth fixed in gold. She is the daughter of the Lord of the place in the mountainous tract, where the monkey having eaten the Jack fruit, scatters the nuts all round.

She having understood that I have come to know of her love affair, left our well guarded bright home, like a roe which having found out the spread out net runs fast. She has joined her lover, who has seen no defeat, and who is equipped with a shinning spear, and with him she passed through this forest.

I did not pursue her, like the people who pursue the cattle lifters. I simply stand here and enquire of you the direction in which the girl proceeded.

KURINJI

Aham : 8

The heroine tells the maid :

Dear Maid !

In our hero's place the tiger with mouth open will kill a big boar, and drag it along the forest full of jack fruit trees, so as to fill that place with the foul smell of the dead boar. In that place, where the bamboos produce a sound due to friction, the female elephant will uproot trees, so as to fill up the pond which never dries up and in which the Surapunnai and the plantain had grown side by side, and into which its mate had fallen. The noise of uprooting the trees will echo along the mountain, which seemed to touch the sky.

If we reach such a place of my lord, slowly tracking our way with the help of the lightning, instead of being misled by the numberless tracks of the deer in the forest, squeezing our drenched shinning tresses, which cover our nape, and if we come across my lord, who would enquire how we managed to reach his place we will not feel the ordeal of the travel at dead of night in the forest, where the long limbed bear while eating the white ants from the ant hills unknowingly clutches with its paws the snake in it and kills it. (But we have not found the lord who will help us in such a way.)

PĀLAI

Aham : 9

The hero tells the charioteer :

In the village along the road in the forest the Iruppai's buds look like the cap of the sharp headed arrows, which are capable of bringing about death, and which are so full as to make the quiver bulge. From among the reddish tender leaves of the Iruppai, the Iruppai flowers, which in colour look like fat, droop from the tree

like the frost shaken by the wind, and lie on the high red ground as red as coral, as to make them resemble the fat on the flesh. In such a place the maidens with fine curly hair pound the grain with the pestles having rims (which are like the bangles). The pounding sound will echo, together with the hooting sound of the owl. along the mountainside. Having passed such a mountainous tract, (though the sun has set), thinking that my home is not distant, I continued the journey goading the speeding horses still further. But before I could actually go and join my Ladylove, who is shy and chaste, who is young, and whose forehead is bright, and whose words are sweet, and who stands at the threshold of the tall storied house, when it is time for the calves to return home, praising the lizard, which portends good omen by its click click, my heart, with the desire to embrace her slender shoulders, having closed her eyes from behind and having touched her pigtail, which is like the proboscis of the female elephant, and having grasped her arms adorned with bangles, reached her.

NEYDAL

Aham : 10

The confidante addresses the hero.

Oh Lord of the coastal region, where the punnai tree, having absorbed the dew scattered by the waves of the wide sea, blossoms, and where the birds rest on the big black branches of the bent and grown up punnai, if you think of parting from the Ladylove, as to make her collyrium painted Neydal flower like eyes drip tears, your action will be considered an extraordinary one.

In flourishing Thoṇdi, the fishermen having repaired their old raft lying on the high shore, against which the waves of the sea pushed by the easterly wind dash and scatter, catch the sharks in new nets, and distribute them among the people in the sweet smelling Pākkam. If the Ladylove is not to lose her loveliness which is comparable to flourishing Thoṇdi, you should marry her and take her with you.

PĀLAI

Aham : 11

The heroine tells the Maid.

In the forest, the heat of the Sun, which appears as a fire ball, and which slowly travels across the sky, has dried up the beautiful forest and the ponds. There the leafless clove tree has blossomed, the sight of which resembles the series of lamps lighted by a group of joyous ladies on the occasion of the Kartigai festival. If the hero will keep company with me in the forest, he could hug me on one of the low mounds under the shade of a tree full of bunches of flowers, along side the dried up stream in which there are small mounds which resemble the spread out bodice. If he does so, my flawless eyes, which like the drooping Kuvaḷai flowers shed tears, as though they will fill the empty ponds, will stop shedding tears and make me sleep.

KURINJI

Aham: 12

The confidante of the heroine addresses the hero.

The mother takes care of the heroine as she would take care of her own eyes; her father would not tolerate the sight of her walking even a short distance and would begin to enquire what she intends to do by taking a walk, as to make her tender feet become reddish; she and I had been never separated from one another and are so intimate as to think that we are one in soul though our bodies are separate. We are comparable to a bird having two heads.

Oh Lord of the mountainous tract! In your place as against the noise the women folk on the fields make to scare away the birds, the parrots will call their mates (as if answering their noise). The Kuṛavar had put up their huts on the mountain side, so that they could secure the fruits of the jack fruit tree, on the branches of which the squirrels run about. The huts of the Kuravar are seen covered by the (yellow) honey-dripping flowers of the Vēngai tree. The elephant which has

black spots on its forehead, mistaking the flower covered huts for a tiger, would run away trampling the bamboos on the mountain side. If you continue to visit the Lady Love, who is tender-hearted, during night time, she would not live long due to anxiety about your safety, while passing through such dangerous country.

PĀLAI

Aham: *13*

The Maid tells the hero.

The Pāṇdya king wears on his chest, where dwells the goddess of fortune, a string of pearls got from his south sea, and an ornament made of sandalwood, which was brought by the Kuṛavar having worshipped the God, who would protect those who worship Him and make the enemies pay tribute.

The general of the Pāṇdya, Paṇṇi, who is the lord of Kōdai and who wields sharp arrows, would give away as present everything, without caring to have anything for himself, not only when he is engaged in training the elephant which was caught in a pit, to do his behests, but at all times.

During winter when the dew falls the cold wind would make the ears of paddy, which look like tongues of fire in a fertile field, to droop down on the ridges of the field; it would also make the white stork, which is seated on the bright flowered sugarcane to send longing calls to its mate. During that season when the clouds gather in the south and bring heavy rain, the Lady Love would be a fitting companian to you. But, if you think of departing from her for the sake of amassing wealth, which might help you to do good things such as the sacrifice made by Paṇṇi, and stay away from her, you may have to forego the pleasure of embracing the lady love, in a faultless spread out bed in a fitting place. If you are bent on making the journey for the sake of wealth, I wish that there is no impediment to your endeavour.

MULLAI

Aham : 14

The Pāṇan tells his companions.

In the broad road on the red ground, which resembled the lac, the withered blue flowers, of the Kāyā tree, lay scattered. Red insects moved across the road and that made the road look as if, it had been paved with corals and sapphire. The deer with twisted horns, hugging their mates, pranced along the road having eaten the grass. The cows, which have grazed the well grown grass after having been brought to the grazing fields by the shepherds, who decked themselves with sweet smelling flowers, returned in the evening with milk laden udders to the manger calling their calves. At this evening, the ladylove told me that she did not know what would befall her before morn, if the hero does not come back even that evening. I could not give her a suitable reply. I, therefore, began to play the sevvaḻi tune on the yāḻ, and prayed to God. Then I left the place with the intention of meeting the hero and conveying the anguish of the ladylove, without giving vent to my feelings.

When I thus started Lo! I beheld the well adorned chariot, which belonged to the hero, who is the Lord of the neighbouring place, on the mountain side. The wheels of the chariot, which had many spokes, came running over stones making noise similar to the thundering noise of the winter clouds, as the hero was goading the steeds to run faster, overcoming all obstruction.

PĀLAI

Aham : 15

In the following lines the mother of a girl, who had eloped with her lover, expresses her anxiety.

My daughter, whose shoulders resemble the slender bamboos, which grow on the mountain side, has left the house, which was as well guarded as Pāḻi, which belongs to Nannan, who wears bright

ornaments, and who possesses elephants with head dress, so as to make me and her playmates, feel unhappy. Having joined her lover she passed through the forest, where herds of strong limbed bears, having eaten the withered fresh Iruppai flowers go to the Konṟai trees, raising dust all through the way, and begin to eat the ripe konrai fruits, from among the beautiful to look at branches of the trees.

In the land of the Kosar, who belong to the Tuḷu Nadu, and who are famed for their truthfulness and who wear valuable ornaments, the peacocks, whose plumes have spots which look like the black spots on the drums, will eat the well grown fruits of the Pāgal creeper. In the villages, which have chēris close by the people will give food and shelter to those who came to them from other places without any thing on hand. I wish the places through which my daughter and her lover pass through, to have such people, so that the two may not have to suffer any hardship.

MARUDAM

Aham: *16*

In the following lines the wife tells her husband, who had denied having lived with a courtesan, an incident she had witnessed.

My son's flawless palms are like the inner petals of the lotus flower, which has blossomed in a back water in which there are beavers. His lips are ruddy like the corals. His babbling sound is pleasant to hear. He wears gold bangles and is so handsome as to be loved by everyone.

The courtesan, whom you love and who has adorned herself with a number of gold ornaments, and who has sharp teeth, having seen my son all alone on the street in which the chariots pass by finding none, who could watch her, went close to him, as he is after you, and saying 'my darling come to me', hugged him with joy.

Having seen this sight, instead of returning home I went to her, and embraced her and enquired whether she was stupified at the sight of my son, and whether she was also a mother of my son. At

once she stood before me, making lines on the floor with her toes, head drooped down as that of those, who had confessed their guilt. Having seen this and thinking that only those, who are comparable to goddess Arundati, who dwells in the skies, could be my son's mother, I too began to love her.

PĀLAI

Aham: 17

The foster mother expresses her grief at the elopement of her step-daughter.

My step daughter would complain that she got exhausted even if she played a little with the ball in the prosperous and beautiful house, or even if she played Kaḻaṅgu with her playmates of her age. So saying and with sweat on her forehead she would embrace me. Those days are gone.

Having won the heart of the hero, she does not seem to think of any of us. She has even left the well guarded house of her famed father.

She has to pass through a forest, where the noise made by the salt vendors, while they goad the buffaloes, which refuse to proceed further by giving cruel cuts with canes, will echo along the high mountains, as if the people of a whole town are in uproar. In the forest the thickly grown bamboos have become dry due to the hot rays of the sun. The trunks of the yā trees have been soiled by the elephants, while they proceeded rubbing their mud covered bodies on the trunks of the trees. The strong wind, which blows there, will make the flowers of the clove tree along the road in the forest to fall like the sparks from the lamps, lighted using ghee, during festival time, by the people of an ancient and famous place. The remaining few flowers will appear like the few stars in the sky at dawn. I wonder whether the tender feet of my young and intelligent girl, which are adorned by anklets, are capable of withstanding the strain of passing through such a difficult tract.

KURIÑJI

Aham: 18

The confidante tells the hero.

Oh! Lord of the high mountains!

The colour of the torrent in the forest has been changed by the withered flowers, which closely cover the surface of the water. The currents in the torrent dash against high rocks on which the crocodiles sleep and recede. The torrent appears to be a dangerous one, as it dashes against the rutted elephant, which had got separated from its herd and drags into it, after having made the elephant lose its strength.

But you cross the torrent like a fearless boar, and come to our place. Will anyone cross the place, which is also haunted by spirits and come here in the dead of night? The Ladylove will not survive if any danger befalls you. Even those who pass through safely for a long time are apt to miss the right road. When that is so, if you come (crossing the dangerous torrent and the haunted place) we will be subjected to untold anxiety and unhappiness.

On the nearby high peaked mountain, where there are round honeycombs, and where the thickly grown trees are full of fruits you can embrace the lady whom you love, and whose lengthy tender shoulders resemble the portion between the two joints of the bamboo, and who has been brought up with care by her mother, even during day time, under the Kanthal bush.

PĀLAI

Aham: 19

Hero tells his heart (a soliloquy)

My blessed heart! You did not stay on with my darling when I left her: having come with me to the lofty mountain, where the kite stays and frightens the travellers by its terrible voice frequently, and where the owls perched on tall broad branches of the yā trees

hoot like the sound of the Kettle drum, you are suffering a lot and you are not prepared to continue the journey further with me. If you are bent on returning, do it by all means quickly. May your desire be accomplished.

My Lady Love, whose eyes, which are like the petals of the black Kuvaḷai flower, will become red like the petals of the Naṟavam flower, as the hot tears gather in the eyes and roll down the cheeks, while she is reminded of me. My Ladylove, who is like a creeper from which the flowers had withered, and who has few bangles on her forearms, will always be staying inside the house doing nothing having the lighted gold lamp as her companion. Oh, heart you may go and embrace her from behind. At least then do not forget me.

NEYDAL

Aham: 20

The confidante of the heroine addresses the hero.

We used to sit under the pleasant shade of the punnai on the shore where the fat fish caught by our father in the wide sea was being dried on the sand and scare away the birds from picking them. We also used to destroy the deep nest of the reddish crabs on the beach, and enjoy swinging on the swing, which had been suspended from the high branch of the Konṟai tree with the fibre of the Thālai, which had grown in the winding back waters. We used to play Kuravai on the sand dunes, set by the easterly wind. If we got bored with this play, we used to swim in the sea full of foam with our playmates and deck ourselves in a garment of leaves and fine flowers. The ladies of the town, who always speak ill of others have informed our mother of our activities on the beach. Our mother, having learnt that a chariot, which produces a clinking sound on the sand dunes, and which is drawn by good horses selected by the charioteer, frequents the wide beach, has kept us under vigilance, day and night, in the house.

PĀLAI

Aham 21:

The hero tells his heart (a soliloquy).

The jasmine creeper has spread on the tender Nochchi tree in our garden. The Ladylove's teeth look like the carefully arranged jasmine buds, which attract the bees. She has a beautiful belly and her hip is broad. She has dressed her flowing tresses. Her upper arm resembles the bamboo and is at the same time tender.

I told you not to depart from her for the sake of making a fortune with which you could present her with different kinds of pleasing ornaments. But you did not listen to me and departed from her, which has made her lose her beautiful form. (so proceed with the work of earning a fortune).

Come on, let us pass through the poor villages, where the pleasant smelling southerly wind has made the clusters of right whorled flowers of the mara trees to wither and fall on the curly haired head of the warriors, who pass through them. The mara trees look bare without the flowers, as though the flowers have been beaten down with a stick by the flower picker.

Let us also pass through the high mountain, where there are omai trees with spread out branches. On such trees the female eagles sit and watch the young ones. There the wild dog with longing eyes would attack the boar in order that it may feed its mate, which had recently given birth to pups in one of the caves. Frightened by the duel between the wild dog and the boar, the pig would run so fast as to make the clusters of red, unripe Endu fruits to fall on the ground. In such a place the folk, who consume a ragi gruel and whose work is to dig the wells with the pick axe, had abandoned the wells they had dug as they could not find water. The empty wells so dug would be filled by the dried up leaves of the trees. The herds of elephants that pass through such a place, thinking that the pits have been dug up by the folk, who are intent on capturing them for the sake of their white tusks, would fill up the pits by rolling down large stones.

KURIÑJI

Aham: 22

In this poem the Ladylove tells her maid, what her mother did when she noticed certain changes in her.

Puzzled by certain changes in me due to the separation from the hero, whose sweet smelling breast I long to embrace, my mother took the advise of wise women, who declared that the illness would disappear if the Neduvēḷ, who has broad arms, and who had attained fame by destroying the enemies, was appeased. Accordingly my mother set up an altar in the house, and worshipped Him, garlanding (the Vēl), singing, making sacrifice and by sprinkling the Tinai mixed with the blood of the sacrificed animal.

At midnight, on the same day, the hero, who is responsible for my suffering, and who is capable of relieving that suffering, wearing a garland of flowers, which will attract the bees, moved around my house like a tiger with stealthy looks in search of an elephant prey, and entering the house escaping the vigilance of the guards hugged me so as to satisfy my longing. Not knowing the true cause of my suffering, my mother worshipped Murugā, who was in no way connected with my suffering and this makes me laugh at her ignorance.

The hero is the Lord of the land, where on the peaks of the mountains the Gods dwell, and where streams flow from the mountains, and where there are thick forests.

PĀLAI

Aham: 23

These words are spoken by the Ladylove when the hero, who left on earning wealth did not return at the promised time.

The thundering clouds have shed copious rain. The buds of the red jasmine in the bush, (which resemble the thorn of the Sival,) and the thick clusters of buds of the Pidā, have blossomed and together filled the forest with a pleasant smell. The hart with sprightly steps, having consumed the roots of the grass in the pits along with the stalk of the white Kōdal, which looks like a conch that has been split, to the point of satisfaction, lies embracing the roe,

having drunk the cool water. My lover pointed to the black branch of the Nochchi tree in our house, on which the jasmine creeper had crept, and said that he would come back after amassing wealth, at the time the jasmine blossoms. Tell me whether this is not the season when the jasmine will blossom.

MULLAI

Aham : *24*

The hero tells his heart (a soliloquy)

The conical buds of the Pakanṟai, which look like the conch left over by the non-sacrificing Brahmin, who cuts bangles has blossomed as drops of rain sprinkled on them. The clouds came down as though the sky had shed its outer coat, and have caused heavy rains at dawn, when the sun is not clearly visible due to the mist. My love with a bright forehead spends the dark misty nights lonely in her place, in this month of Thai, which marks the close of the winter season.

During the war the fierce King had the unsheathed sword hanging from his shoulder, even during dead of night. The bells, tied to the necks of his small eyed elephants, whose white tusks had become blunt as the coverings on the tusks broke, while destroying well guarded doorways of the enemies, sounded as the elephants advanced. The arrows, while piercing the leather shields tied to poles, made a kind of sound. The trumpets were sounded. But as the war had now come to a close the soldiers have a sound sleep in the camp. But I sit alone in the camp reminded of my love.

PĀLAI

Aham : *25*

The maid consoles the Lady love when she complained of the delay in her lord's return.

The fast flowing stream in the forest having high banks had ceased to flow. But it has caused the formation of deep ponds. The pollen filled flowers of the Kāñchi trees in the groves near the ponds have withered and fallen on the mounds of sand, and have filled the

region with a pleasant smell. The Cuckoo, which shines like the Sapphire, pecking at the tender leaves of the mango tree seemed to convey by its calls, that this is the time for the lovers to rejoin. Swarms of bees shed the pollen dust in the flowers of the Kōṅgu tree on the flowers of the Ilavam tree, so as to make them look like the cups of coral in which gold is kept by those, who sell gold. Recalling the words of the hero, who said he would come back in this spring season, which would prevent even those who want to go in quest of wealth from leaving their spouse, don't be dejected and make your collyrium painted eyes shed tears, as he has not returned as promised. Our hero, had gone in quest of wealth crossing the lands belonging to Tittiyan. In the land of Tittiyan the noise raised by the waterfalls in the forests will sound like the sound of Tittiyan's victorious war drum. Tittiyan who is the lord of Podiyil, and who rides on a chariot of gold had overcome his enemies with the help of his victorious bow. (Likewise) our hero will return soon (having overcome all obstacles), and exclaim, Oh! my darling I am sorry for having kept you anxious.

MARUDAM

Aham: *26*

In these words the Ladylove tells her maid what she did when the hero returned from the house of the prostitute:

There was a time when the hero praised the beauty of my breasts, and requested me when I pushed him back due to pain, not to prevent him from tightly embracing my breasts with black ends resembling the iron caps of the tusks of the elephants, which destroy the strong doors of the fortified cities. But, now when I desired to embrace his bright and scented breast, by pressing my sweet and soft breasts, on which there are beauty spots, and from which oozes the milk, which prevents my son from thinking of consuming anything else, he did not like it fearing that the milk oozing from my breasts would leave stains on his chest. Therefore, he loosened my arms tightly embracing him. Realising his thoughts I left him and approaching my son, who was just learning to walk, and who was in the arms of the nurse said, "we are fit to embrace the young one, you are fit to embrace the prostitute." When the hero heard what I

uttered he came to me and embraced me from behind saying that he too loved the child. Touched by those words I stood before him having accepted him, as a land which has been ploughed well receives the cool waters of a heavy rain. Oh! maid, how could I forsake the hero, who is the lord of the town, where there are fertile green fields, and where girls play with the withered black flowers of the Mulli shrub, having curved thorns.

PĀLAI

Aham: 27

These words are uttered by the maid when the Ladylove was troubled by the news of her husband's intended departure in quest of wealth.

If you believe the account of those, who say that the hero wants to depart from you in quest of wealth, which is needed and that he would think of passing through the forest, where the striped tiger moves about and where strong bamboos on the mountainside are tossed by the westerly wind, you are really a foolish lady. Your teeth set in the coral coloured mouth, while smiling resembles the pearls obtained at the beautiful coastal town of Korkai, which belongs to the Pāṇdyas who exacted the white tusked elephants as tribute from the Vēṅgaṭā Mountainside in the north, and who are famed for their valour in war and just rule. Thy smile would stop him from proceeding on his journey (in quest of wealth). Your collyrium painted eyes, have in beauty excelled the honey filled flower of the Kuvaḷai (whose well grown stalk absorbs clear water), which has red lines. Your eyes move like the victorious Vēl, which has on it blood stains, and which the kings employ in killing the enemy in war (as to invite the kites in large number to eat the dead.) Even if thy smile cannot stop him from quest for wealth, your down cast look would certainly stop him.

KURIÑJI

Aham: 28

The maid utters these words to the Lady Love so that the hero, who is waiting in hiding might over hear and realise the danger in continuing to meet his love secretly.

Though the waters of the springs have dried up, the green stalks of the Tinai hold the well grown ears of corn. Before they could be harvested the birds have eaten up some corn, and some of the stalks therefore look bare. You are bent on meeting the hunter, who goes to distant places, crossing the mountains with his fast running hounds, and who wears a garland of flowers from which drips honey, and which spreads around a variety of pleasant smell. My dear Lady! In your desire to keep on embracing the hero, you did not think of the danger that will follow. Listen to my words, if you do not rise up from your place often and move here and there and raise cries which would scare away the parrots, your mother would consider you unfit for the task, and would take you home. Then it would be difficult to have the embrace of the hero.

PĀLAI

Aham: *29*

The hero tells his Ladylove his state of mind when he was away from her.

The Lady of choice ornaments! You are repeatedly enquiring, suppressing the smile on your red lipped and well teethed mouth, whether I had forgotten the sweet words I uttered that, "I will not survive, if I fail to see the pleasant picture of your collyrium painted eyes, resembling the two halves of the tender mango, cut with a knife." The tiger which has the strength of will and effort to carry out what it thinks, would not touch the elephant, which had been beaten down on the left side, even if it was to starve. I left in quest of wealth with much more strength of will and ever increasing interest, so that I could avoid public reproach. Now listen to me. I travelled across the forest, where the heat of the Sun never decreases and is like burning fire, and where the weak elephant, that passes through it would run after the mirage not knowing where there was water, and would lie on the way as to look like a boat in a dried up river. One would shudder even if he thinks of the hardships in the forest, and would forget his task. Yet I went with the sole aim of achieving my object. But although my body was there, my heart stayed with you.

NEYDAL

Aham: *30*

The maid addresses the hero in these words.

Like the strong oxen tied to the carts used by the salt merchants along the coast, the fisherfolk, young and old with their wives and relatives would catch a variety of fish, in large numbers from the sea, with the help of the nets having small holes, and return to the beach filled with fine sand making loud noise. Then like the farmers who make heaps of corn on the threshing field, they will fill freely the bowls of the poor with the fish. They will then make heaps of what was left over, fix a price for each heap and sell them. Having sold the fish they will sleep on the high beach. Oh! Lord of the place where the fisherfolk thus go to sleep, why not you pay a visit to our garden near the shore, in which the punnai is full of buds, resembling the uncleaned pearls, and say, how beautiful are you! Do you think it will be beneath your dignity to do so?

PĀLAI

Aham: *31*

These words are spoken by the Ladylove when it was pointed out that she was pining due to the separation from her lover.

The Sun was hot like fire. The crops had died out due to the severe heat. In this season due to the failure of the rains many creatures had perished as to make it appear that the end of the world was approaching; the Maravar, who live in small townships, where stones lay scattered, had killed the passers-by. From the wounds caused by them had come out the fat and the dead lay as if adorned with a garland of red Alari flowers, in pools of blood on the road, which looked bare. The kites pecked the eyes of the dead and fed their young ones with them on top of the tall yā tree, devoid of leaves.

The hero (who left in quest of wealth) passing through this forest in the lands beyond the mountains, where a different tongue is spoken and which are protected by the three Tamil kings, who enjoy the tribute that they had gained by defeating others, by their ability in wielding the bow. Dear Maid, the people don't say that the hero left me here (but only point out my suffering due to the separation from him).

KURIÑJI

Aham: 32

The Ladylove tells the maid of her love for the hero.

Yesterday, a man adorned with an ornament set with bright gems came to me, while I was in the Tinai field, and in contrast to his outward appearance spoke to me meekly as one who seeks favour, and exclaimed, "you have made me love-sick ; you stand before me like a goddess of a mountain, scaring away the parrots by beating the kuḷir and the Thaṭṭai ; who are you? Let me have you". So saying he embraced me from behind As the earth is loosened by the rain, my heart was touched by his words, and I began to shudder. Lest he should notice this I freed myself from his embrace, and purposely spoke to him in harsh words and stood aside like a frightened roe. Thinking that he had failed to move my heart he left the place, like a male elephant that departs from its mate, without uttering any more words. (But again he has come). Even today he will fail to have his own way. He does not realise that he alone has the right to embrace my well formed shoulders. He comes to me and stands entreating from behind. Maid, come, let us enjoy teasing him in this way.

PĀLAI

Aham: 33

The hero addresses his heart thus: (a soliloquy)

Oh! my heart! You emphasised the good in seeking wealth and made me leave behind in the house my love, who is chaste, and who has a shinning forehead, and goaded me to pass through the route alongside of which stands a yā tree, whose branches are devoid of tender leaves. Perched on the only high branch of the tree at a comfortable place, the male kite, which is capable of taking its prey in a swoop making a shrill sound, calls its mate with curved beak by raising a pleasing sound. Having come all the way treading the mountain paths, full of sharp edged stones across the hillocks, and having failed to impress on me the difficulties on the way, and having been reminded of the sorrowful looks of the Ladylove, whose collyrium painted eyes excel the beauty of the flowers, you now think of leaving me alone here and going back (to my love.) It would have been good if

you had not departed from the Ladylove, whose shoulders are broad, and whose abdomen is full of beauty spots, and whose teeth are spotlessly white, and whose forearms are slender like the tender bamboo, on top of the ancient Kolli mountain, which belongs to the victorious chēra. On the day you parted you ignored our feelings towards her, and now if you prevent me from proceeding further you will only make ourselves a laughing stock. (so don't stop me.)

MULLAI

Aham: *34*

The hero addresses the charioteer in thefollowing words:

In the pastoral region, the short black Pidavu bush, having light green tender leaves at the top, has blossomed as to look like a garland of flowers. The harts with long twisted horns, resembling the fork of a tree used by the hunter, who wears sandals of leather, help their mates surrounded by their young ones to eat the ears of the close leaved grass, along with its reddish stalks, and keep watch as the roes take a nap chewing the cud on the sandy banks of the crystal clear stream. The sight of this makes me feel that I had not been so affectionate towards my Ladylove.

The washerwoman, whose shoulders are broad, presses the white starch into the clothes with her slender fingers. In the vicinity of our house, which is well guarded the male swans, whose feathers are as white as the starch used by the washerwoman, are playing joyfully with their mates. In the house the lady love, who is shy, holding the parrot, whose neck is red in colour, is training the parrot in a low voice, so that the others may not hear to utter the sweet words, "the hero will return home today." Oh! skilled, charioteer let the chariot run faster so that I may embrace the Ladylove soon.

PĀLAI

Aham: *35*

In these words the mother describes how her daughter eloped with her lover:

My daughtr left the house, surrounded by high walls, forgetting her own mother, who gave birth to her and brought her up. The

Maravar, who had taken to the profession of fighting and who wielded lengthy spears with sharp edges and adorned with small bells, while returning after recovering the cows taken by the enemy, adorned the hero stones on their way, with the feathers of the peacock, and worshipped them by offering the toddy extracted from paddy, and by sacrificing a lamb while the sweet drum was sounded. The sacrifice made by them has left a foul smell around that place. My daughter has become emboldened to pass through such place.

May the hero, who leads her through the places, where there are none known to my daughter, whose curly black tresses resemble the fine black sand in the bed of the river Peṇṇai, which flows in the neighbourhood of koduṅgāl, which belongs to Kāri of tall chariot and in whose town, Kōvalūr, the trumpet sound is heard at all times, be affectionate towards her and speak high of her and make her sleep in his embrace.

MARUDAM

Aham: *36*

The Ladylove refuses to accept the hero pointing out that he had sought the love of a prostitute:

The male varāl fish having stripes on its body, with its mouth open, swallowed the food attached to the fish hook not knowing that it has been let down by the fisherman. But then realising the mistake rose up tearing the tender leaves of the Āmbal, and leapt as to shatter the petals of the Kuvalai flower, and as to toss the twisted Vaḻḻai creeper in the pond, and thereby made the pond muddy. When the fisherman drew the line, it tried to escape as if it was a fierce bull, which has to be caught with the help of strong ropes. Oh! Lord of such a place, I hear that in the grove of tall Marudam trees, full of flowers, adjoining the sandy bank of the ever flowing Vaigai river you married the prostitute, whose tresses have a pleasant smell and who wears bangles.

This news has caused so much talk as to excel the uproar, at Alamganam, of the victorious warriors of the Pāṇdya Neduṅjeḻiyan, who rides in a chariot adorned with a flag and drawn by steeds, whose mane had been well cropped, when the Pāṇdya defeated in a single day the seven, namely the Chēra, the Chōḻa, the fierce Titiyan, Eḻini

who possessed strong war elephants, and who wore a gold ornament, the lord of Erumaiyūr, which is famous for the filtered toddy, Irungō-Veṇman, who had smeared on his breast the sweet smelling sandal paste, and Porunan who had a splendidly carved chariot, as to make the place red with the blood of the killed, and captured their trumpets, and white umbrellas and spread his fame by offering sacrifice on the battle field.

PĀLAI

Aham: *37*

In these words the Ladylove tells the Maid when the hero failed to return at the proper season:

In the summar season, at day break, when the birds and other creatures make their calls, the joyous farmers shook the bundles of stalks of paddy (to separate the corn from the hay) and then winnowed as to make the chaff rise up like a dark cloud that hides the view. Then they drank from the cups made of leaves dried in the sun, like the buffaloes that enter a pond, the fermented toddy kept in new pots, and in which had been soaked the tender mangoes, resembling the curved beak of the parrot, and picked from the bunches hanging from the branches of the mango tree, which had sprouted luxuriantly due to the cool southerly wind. They also went on drinking the gruel, cooked by mixing the rice resembling the cut pieces of silver wire, with gram, pulse, and milk by having it poured into their palms joined together till they could not consume more of it. Having drunk they made tall barns of paddy, round in shape as the sun, and then took rest in the shade of the Marudam trees along with the oxen. This Summer season has come to a close. The hero (who said he would return in the Summer season and had failed to do so) would not forget us and stay away. But we have lost his company this summer season.

KURIÑJI

Aham : *38*

The Ladylove repents in these words for not having informed the hero, the place of her residence.

The hero, who is the Lord of the mountain, which seems to touch the sky, used to come wearing garlands of large bunches of Vēṅgai flowers surrounded by bees, and Kuvaḷai flowers from which honey drips holding the beautiful bow in the left hand, and the strong, speeding, choice arrows (in the right hand) to meet me. If he comes (to the place where we met first) he would find the rope swing, tied to a high branch of the Asōku tree, whose tender leaves look luxuriant, missing. As we have not bathed in the hill pond, the water in the pond would be clear, and the long petaled blue flowers would have blossomed as to resemble our eyes. As the Tinai crop has been harvested the stalks, in the field, would stand without the curved sheaves of tinai, which due to their weight could not be carried away by the fine feathered young parrots. The hero, who would witness these would think of us deeply and not knowing what to do would stay there itself in anguish.

I forgot to tell him, when I departed from him that my place is on the high mountain, which contains ponds, from which flow crystal clear streams, within hearing distance. I will be losing my beauty (as he would not be in a position to know my place and come and meet me here).

PĀLAI

Aham : *39*

The hero tells the Ladylove his suffering while he was away from her.

Oh ! Lady of sweet smelling tresses, which attract the bees, you enquire suppressing the smile on your coral like red lips, and thorn like sharp teeth, whether I thought of you after travelling a long

distance from home, having left the home ignoring the ancient principle (that the ladies ought not be troubled). By so doing you make me unhappy. Don't utter falsehood (even playfully). Will I ever forget your matchless beauty? I have not.

After I had travelled a long distance, I reached a forest in which the spark emitted by the well grown bamboos, rubbing against one another set on fire the dried up leaves. The fire burnt the dried up grass at a higher place also and spread in all directions. The group of merchants (who were passing through that forest) ran for safety in terror. In the same forest, in a different place herds of elephants frigh-tened by a courageous tiger wandered here and there in confusion.

In that forest when the Sun neared the horizon and slowly dis-appeared and when it was not possible to proceed further, I stretched my limbs and allowing my thoughts to reel round you, suddenly fell asleep. Then I had a vision in which you appeared with the downcast looks of a roe trying to set right the bangles, which had become loose, (due to my parting) and making lines on the earth, with the toes in a thoughtful mood. I then exclaimed, the Lady with a sweet smile (on your face) why don't you talk to me, when I am unhappy (due to your absence) and so saying I gently touched your narrow forehead with prominent eye brows and your pleasantly perfumed tresses. (Alas I then woke up). I then realised that I had been dreaming and felt all the more unhappy, as a result of the disappointment I went to sleep again to find relief. As you are not aware of this experience, in the forest, you keep silent without talking to me.

NEYDAL

Aham : 40

The Ladylove tells the Maid of her love for the hero.

In the evening the flowers, (which blossomed in the morning) in the ponds (in the grove) near the shore, closed their petals. The blue sea became rough and the roaring noise (of the waves) increased. The

flocks of fine feathered birds, which live on the fish in the sea, returned to their nests in a strong Punnai tree. The bees that move slowly began to buzz. At this evening all the creatures return to their place of shelter, and the easterly wind that tosses the screw pine, increases the longing for the hero, and even makes me unhappy. Even if the hero, who is responsible for my suffering does not return and make me happy, let not his love for me fade away.

Let not my heart which is after the hero's breast, which is suitable for taking a nap, come back to me as it had not received the attention of the hero, who is the lord of the littoral region, where frightened by the sound of the drums beaten while the farmers harvested the white paddy from the field, the cranes raising a sound similar to that of a bugle horn will take refuge in the Palmyrah trees.

PĀLAI

Aham : 41

The hero who was reminded of his love while he was away tells his heart. (Soliloquy)

At dawn when darkness disappears the buffaloes go for grazing In the branches of the Murukku, swarms of bees buzz around the Murukku flowers, which are red in colour as fire. The farmers take the ploughs, from the fields in which the paddy has been cultivated, to the fields in which there are conical blocks of clay, and plough the land full of stumps with the help of choice oxen. The noise made by them while ploughing is heard clearly around. The forest has become beautiful to look at as the trees stand with clusters of flowers.

In this season, the well shaped shoulders of the Ladylove, whose body is full of beauty spots resembling drops of pollen honey, that has fallen on tender leaves from the cool clusters of flowers, and which attract the bees, whose feathers are light, have never agreed to our separation from her. They have lost their shape owing to our departure. Did the Ladylove suffer due to our absence ?

KURIÑJI

Aham : 42

The Maid tells the Ladylove that the hero has come with wealth to marry her.

Oh! My Lady, your skin is as soft as the tender leaf, and your curved eyes with affectionate looks resemble the sweet smelling red lined buds of the Pittigam, which blossoms only in rainy season, and which has effloresced due to copious rains, and is so full of flowers that all the flowers could not be picked. The hero, who is the lord of the mountainous tract, where the peaks (seem to) touch the skies, has come (with wealth) to marry you from a far off place.

This has made me as joyous as many, who at day dawn were surprised to find the high banked empty tanks, which had not been frequented by birds, full of water due to heavy rains in the night.

PĀLAI

Aham: 43

The hero tells his heart. (Soliloquy)

This is the winter season when the clouds bring rain with thundering noise. The dark clouds, which have absorbed the waters of the sea, rose up the sky from the right side, with lightning and thunder, and there followed such a heavy rain that the female elephant which has few hairs on the head, due to the severe heat of the Sun, began to play with its mate, with its trunk alone raised above the flood waters. It rained so heavily that it appeared as though the sky and earth have been connected by the rain.

The rain was so widespread that the people, excepting those who measure time with the help of the narrow water clock, wondered where the Sun was and began to fear (what would happen to the world.)

In this season, when the scent of the blooming jasmine has been spread throughout the thickly wooded forest by the wind we keep on

embracing the beautiful breasts, of the Ladylove, whose forehead and the tresses adorned in many ways, has the pleasant smell of the jasmine and whose body is tender.

Those who depart with the desire to earn wealth, from their Ladylove, without any consideration for them and forgetting the path of love, are not wise and are to be pitied

MULLAI

Aham: *44*

The hero tells the charioteer:

Our king came to the battle field and achieved victory. The enemies paid tribute, and became friends. The two armies, which were opposed to one another, were now declared to be one by sounding the drum. Perumpūttchenni, who wears a beautiful garland of flowers, unable to endure the loss of Palaiyan and with the intention of avenging his death fought against the enemies of Paḻaiyan and captured Kaḻumalam and made the enemies including Kaṇaiyan, who possessed strong chariots, captives.

Aḻumbil of Perumpūttchenni has thick forests, tanks in which elephants rest, and many households having stocks of old paddy. The town is known for its ever increasing prosperity.

Oh! Charioteer let not your chariot, which is proceeding ahead of other chariots lag behind. Let it run faster still separated from the other chariots, so that the distance can be covered quickly to enable me to sleep on the breast of my good Ladylove, whose beauty is comparable to that of Kudavāyil, which has a temperate climate, and which is comparable to Perumpūttchenni's Aḻumbil.

PĀLAI

Aham: *45*

The Ladylove addresses the Maid.

Oh! Maid: The hero has gone to the high mountain, where the summer is severe and where the clusters of well ripe, dried up pods

of uḻiñjil sound at intervals like the drum used (by dancers) in the dancing place. He has to cross the forest, devoid of water,' taking the path, which no one treads and in which the tiger, which had killed tall elephants roams about. I am growing sallow and so my complexion has taken the colour of the flower of the green gourd.

The talk about me (due to this) is much louder than the songs of praise sung by the dancers when Aṉṉi cut off the old puṉṉai tree, which was the tutelary tree of Titiyan at the battle fought at Kurukkai.

As the people of a fort, whose walls had been destroyed in war by Vānavaramban, who wields a strong spear. and who has (on his breast) a garland of gold, and who won a victory over the sea, will spend sleepless nights, I will have no sleep due to my anxiety as to what had happened to the hero. I wonder whether I will have to wander (in search of the hero) as Ādi Mandi, who having missed her husband wandered in search of him, with grief?

MARUDAM

Aham: *46*

The Maid refuses to admit the hero when he returned from the house of the prostitute.

During the night, when the people of the town are asleep the red eyed buffalo, having got disgusted with staying in mud, will snap the rope with which it was kept tied, open the gate of sharp thorns with its horns, run into the field covered with water, and drive the fish in the water in all directions, toss, the Vaḷḷai creeper with hollow stalks and eat the cool lotus flowers in which the bees stay and make noise.

Oh Lord of such a town!

Are you not related to us? Why should we be at variance towards you?

The townsfolk say that you brought home the prostitute, who has long well combed tresses that could not be described in words and married her.

Oh my Lord, we do not say so. May you prosper.

Let the bright bangles of the Ladylove, which could be compared with Aḷḷūr, full of bright barns of paddy, and which belongs to Seḻian, the victorious, who will destroy the elephants of his enemy by his fierce attack in battle, become loose and fall from her forearms. Oh my lord, you can go to the place of your choice (home of the prostitute). Who can prevent you from going to the prostitute?

PĀLAI

Aham: 47

The hero tells his heart. (Soliloquy)

Oh my heart!

The storm tossed the pliable bamboo of luxuriant growth, at the top as to make noise, and then made the flaming forest fire spread to the nearby mountain sides having clefts, and made the bamboos burst at the joints with such noise as to drive the herds of deer from the forest. We have passed through the difficult paths across such a forest.

When the Sun which is big (in size among the planets) has set behind the mountains in the west, the maiden wearing bright bangles will light the white wick (of the lamps). The male dove, which takes short steps with its red feet, will call its mate by cooing from the houses having tall entrance.

At this evening, which is painful for those separated from their beloved, the Ladylove will wonder where we are begin to shed tears.

With an unrelenting mind if we finish our work, we can embrace as many times as possible the slimming shoulders of our Ladylove, which resemble the bamboos by the side of the sweet smelling-kuthalam, in the Siru Malai where the dark clouds rest, and which belongs to Seḻiyan of the strong arm, and beautifully adorned tall chariot.

KURIÑJI

Aham : *48*

The Maid tells the foster mother.

Oh mother, may you live for a long time. Mother, listen to what I say with interest. You are enquiring why your daughter has become sallow and why she refuses to drink even milk.

I too do not know the exact reason for it. Sometime past, along with our playmates, we went to the mountainside, full of flowers to pick the flower of the Vēṅgai tree, whose branches had thick leaves and cried out tiger ! tiger. (as we picked).

There came a man with a garland (on his breast) made by letting through the needle into the bright Sengaḻuneer flowers, resembling the eyes of the maiden, and a garland of Vetchi flowers on one side of the head. On his breast, which is suitable for the embrace of the maiden, he had smeared the red sandal paste. He was holding the bow having drawn the string and a choice arrow. He enquired in which direction did the tiger pass ?

When we saw him in front of us we became bashful and so stood hiding ourselves behind one another. (Thereupon) he exclaimed, Oh ! young ladies, who have dark tresses, plaited and divided into five divisions and who have bright foreheads, are you capable of uttering false words ?

So saying He, who is the Lord of the mountainous tract, left the place slowing down the speed of the horses tied to his chariot; but looked back many times to have a look at the collyrium painted eyes of your daughter.

Your daughter looking in the direction in which he was slowly moving out of sight, when the day came to a close at Sun set exclaimed he was a gentleman.

For those who can understand things this has a meaning.

PALAI

Aham : 49

The foster mother bemoans the elopement of her daughter.

My daughter was ever fond of parrots, and playing with ball and beans. She was benovolent, affectionate, tender and active. But then I found a change in all her activities. I did not know why ?

Like the cow tied to the tree along with its calf, looks at the calf, I looked at her back and approaching her from behind, I gently touched her forehead and embraced her. My daughter in her turn embraced me again and again so as to cause prespiration. Alas ! This is now a thing of the past.

If I had known that the hero, who is physically strong and generous, would take with him my daughter, under the thin shade of the trees, extoling her beauty in many ways, through the forest, where the herds of young deer consume the leaves of the plants, which were half dried up, due to the failure of the rains, I would have been with her like a shadow, and would have been with her even when she played with her playmates as to cause the rattling sound of her anklets, filled with a number of stones.

Let me die (as I cannot endure the separation from her.)

NEYDAL

Aham : *50*

The Maid tells the minstrel.

Oh ! bard ! The hero, who is the Lord of the littoral tract, which has a cold climate used to come frequently even when the uproar caused by the fishermen on the sea stopped and the boats stopped sailing in the sea, crossing the deep back waters in which the sharks leapt. Unmindful of the talkative women, who spread scandal, he used to be with me even during day time, allowing his tall chariot of fine workmanship wait for a long time.

Bard! why not you go to the place of the hero stealthily, passing through the flourishing ancient town and meet him. Having met the hero, who had had his lust satisfied, during the period of Kaiavu, and who has since then stopped visiting us, do not enquire how he is related to us. Instead inform him that the bright faced Ladylove remains silent, with tears obstructing her vision, reminded of the fact, that the Anril birds resting in the palmyrah tree, near her house, does not sleep in the night, if the mate is away even for a short while. Tell the hero that you cannot console the Ladylove.

APPENDIX II

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22	27	Mantaram Cerai	Mantaram Ceral
31	119 f.n.		Add the word "Padirruppattu"
38	10	Shining	Shinning
41	19	Pandye	Pandya
	23	Valudı	Valudi
	25	th	the
	27	manuscript	manuscripts
42	13	panani	panan
	14	katt	katti
43	31	purananur	purananuru
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47	25	parm	param
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48	11	filed	fled
	24	wat	war
67	4	Aryars	Aryans
70	5	Candemned	Condemned
76	22	leave	leaves
91	8	worshiped	worshipped
96	1	Ahananur	Ahananuru